CLASSICS SERIES S9 AIRMONT 50c

William Shakespeare

The Tragedy of ROMEO and JULIET

Dr. Clara Thomas, *Introduction* / Lucy M. Fitzpatrick, *Notes*

AIRMONT SHAKESPEARE CLASSICS SERIES

The Tragedy of
ROMEO and JULIET

By

William Shakespeare

General Introduction by Dr. David G. Pitt

AIRMONT PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC.
22 EAST 60TH STREET • NEW YORK 10022

An Airmont Classic

specially selected for the Airmont Library
from the immortal literature of the world

THE SPECIAL CONTENTS OF THIS EDITION
© Copyright, 1966, by
Airmont Publishing Company, Inc.

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY IN THE DOMINION OF CANADA
BY THE RYERSON PRESS, TORONTO

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY THE COLONIAL PRESS INC., CLINTON, MASSACHUSETTS

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

William Shakespeare: His Life, Times, and Theatre

HIS LIFE

The world's greatest poet and playwright, often called the greatest Englishman, was born in Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire, in the year 1564. The exact date of his birth is uncertain, but an entry in the *Stratford Parish Register* gives his baptismal date as April 26. Since children were usually baptized two or three days after birth, it is reasonable to assume that he was born on or about April 23—an appropriate day, being the feast of St. George, the patron saint of England.

His father, John Shakespeare, was a glover and dealer in wool and farm products, who had moved to Stratford from Snitterfield, four miles distant, some time before 1552. During his early years in Stratford his business prospered, enabling him to acquire substantial property, including several houses, and to take his place among the more considerable citizens of the town. In 1557 he married Mary, daughter of Robert Arden, a wealthy landowner of Wilmcote, not far from Stratford. Two daughters were born to them before William's birth—Joan, baptized in 1558, and Margaret, baptized in 1562—but both died in infancy. William was thus their third child, though the eldest of those who survived infancy. After him were born Gilbert (1566), another Joan (1569), Anne (1571), Richard (1574), and Edmund (1580).

Very little is positively known (though much is conjectured) about Shakespeare's boyhood and education. We know that for some years after William's birth his father's rise in Stratford society and municipal affairs continued. Many local offices came to him in rapid succession: ale-taster, burgess (a kind of constable), assessor of fines, chamberlain (town treasurer), high bailiff (a kind of magistrate), alderman (town councilor), and chief alderman in 1571. As the son of a man of such eminence in Stratford, Shakespeare undoubtedly attended the local Grammar School. This he was entitled to do free of charge, his father being a town councilor. No records of the school are extant, so that we do not know how good a pupil he was, nor what subjects he studied. It is probable that he covered the usual Elizabethan curriculum: an "A B C book," the catechism in Latin and English, Latin grammar, the translation of Latin authors, and perhaps some Greek grammar and translation as well. But family circumstances appear to have curtailed his formal education before it was complete, for shortly before William reached his fourteenth birthday his father's rising fortunes abruptly passed their zenith.

Although we do not know all the facts, it is apparent that about the year 1578, having gone heavily into debt, John Shakespeare lost two large farms inherited by his wife from her father. Thereafter, he was involved in a series of lawsuits, and lost his post on the Stratford town council. Matters got steadily worse for him, until finally in 1586 he was declared a bankrupt. But by this time the future poet-dramatist was already a family man himself.

In 1582, in the midst of his father's legal and finan-

cial crises—and perhaps because of them—Shakespeare married Anne, daughter of Richard Hathaway (recently deceased) of the village of Shottery near Stratford. The *Episcopal Register* for the Diocese of Worcester contains their marriage record, dated November 28, 1582; he was then in his eighteenth year and his wife in her twenty-sixth. On May 26 of the following year the *Stratford Parish Register* recorded the baptism of their first child, Susanna; and on February 2, 1585, the baptism of a twin son and daughter named Hamnet and Judith.

These facts are all that are known of Shakespeare's early life. How he supported his family, whether he took up some trade or profession, how long he continued to live in Stratford, we do not know for certain. Tradition and conjecture have bestowed on him many interim occupations between his marriage and his appearance in London in the early fifteen-nineties: printer, dyer, traveling-player, butcher, soldier, apothecary, thief—it reads like a children's augury-rhyme (when buttons or cherry-stones are read to learn one's fate). Perhaps only the last-named "pursuit" requires some explanation. According to several accounts, one of them appearing in the first *Life* of Shakespeare by Nicholas Rowe (1709), Shakespeare fell into bad company some time after his marriage, and on several occasions stole deer from the park of Sir Thomas Lucy, a substantial gentleman of Charlecote, near Stratford. According to Rowe:

> For this he was prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought somewhat too severely; and in order to revenge that ill-usage, he made a ballad upon him . . . and was obliged to leave his business and

family in Warwickshire, for some time, and shelter himself in London.

The story has been repeated in varying forms by most subsequent biographers, but its authenticity is doubted by many who repeat it.

Another much more attractive story, which, however, if true, does not necessarily deny the authenticity of Rowe's, is that Shakespeare during the so-called "lost years" was a schoolmaster. This, indeed, appears to be somewhat better substantiated. John Aubrey, seventeenth-century biographer and antiquary, in his *Brief Lives* (1681) declares that he had learned from a theatrical manager, whose father had known Shakespeare, that the dramatist "had been in his younger years a schoolmaster in the country." This may, then, account, in part at least, for the years between his marriage and his arrival in London about the year 1591. It is interesting to note that in two of his early plays Shakespeare includes a schoolmaster among his characters: Holofernes of *Love's Labour's Lost* and Pinch of *The Comedy of Errors*. But let us hope that neither is intended to be Shakespeare's portrait of himself!

However he may have occupied himself in the interim, we know that by 1592 he was already a budding actor and playwright in London. In that year Robert Greene in his autobiographical pamphlet *A Groatsworth of Wit*, referring to the young actors and menders of old plays who were, it seemed to him, gaining undeserved glory from the labours of their betters (both by acting their plays and by rewriting them), wrote as follows:

Yes trust them not: for there is an upstart Crow,

beautified with our feathers, that with his Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hyde, supposes he is as well able to bombast out blanke verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Johannes factotum,* is in his owne conceit the onely Shakescene in a countrey.

"Shakescene" is clearly Shakespeare. The phrase "upstart Crow" probably refers to his country origins and his lack of university education. "Beautified with our feathers" probably means that he uses the older playwrights' words for his own aggrandisement either in plays in which he acts or in those he writes himself. "Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hyde" is a parody of a line in III *Henry VI,* one of the earliest plays ascribed to Shakespeare. And the Latin phrase *Johannes factotum,* meaning Jack-of-all-trades, suggests that he was at this time engaged in all sorts of theatrical jobs: actor, poet, playwright, and perhaps manager as well.

Greene died shortly after making this scurrilous attack on the young upstart from Stratford, and so escaped the resentment of those he had insulted. But Henry Chettle, himself a minor dramatist, who had prepared Greene's manuscript for the printer, in his *Kind-Harts Dreame* (1592), apologized to Shakespeare for his share in the offence.

I am as sory as if the originall fault had beene my fault, because my selfe have seene his demeanor no lesse civill, than he excelent in the qualitie he professes: Besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues honesty, and his facetious grace in writing, that approoves his Art.

Thus, in a very indirect manner and because of an attack upon him by an irascible dying man, we learn that Shakespeare at this time was in fact held in high regard by "divers of worship," that is, by many of high birth, as an upright, honest young man of pleasant manners and manifest skill as an actor, poet, and playwright.

Although Shakespeare by 1593 had written, or written parts of, some five or six plays (I, II, and III *Henry VI, Richard III, The Comedy of Errors,* and perhaps *Titus Andronicus*), it was as a non-dramatic poet that he first appeared in print. *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece;* long narrative poems, both bearing Shakespeare's name, were published in 1593 and 1594 respectively. But thereafter for the next twenty years he wrote almost nothing but drama. In his early period, 1591 to 1596, in addition to the plays named above, he wrote *Love's Labour's Lost, The Taming of the Shrew, Two Gentlemen of Verona, Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Richard II,* and *King John.* Then followed his great middle period, 1596 to 1600, during which he wrote both comedies and history-plays: *The Merchant of Venice,* I and II *Henry IV, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Much Ado about Nothing, Henry V, Julius Caesar, As You Like It,* and *Twelfth Night.* The period of his great tragedies and the so-called "dark comedies" followed (1600-1608): *Hamlet, Troilus and Cressida, All's Well that Ends Well, Measure for Measure, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Timon of Athens,* and *Coriolanus.* The last phase of his career as dramatist, 1608 to 1613, sometimes called "the period of the romances," produced *Pericles, Prince of Tyre, Cymbeline, The Winter's*

Tale, *The Tempest*, parts of *Henry VIII*, and perhaps parts of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Many other plays were ascribed to him, but it is doubtful that he had a hand in any but those we have named. Long before his death in 1616 his name held such magic for the public that merely to print it on the title page of any play assured its popular acclaim. The "upstart Crow" had come a long way since 1592.

He had come a long way too from the economic straits that may well have driven him to London many years before. We know, for example, from the records of tax assessments that by 1596 Shakespeare was already fairly well-to-do. This is further borne out by his purchasing in the following year a substantial house known as New Place and an acre of land in Stratford for £60, a sizable sum in those days. In 1602 he made a further purchase of 107 acres at Stratford for £320, and a cottage and more land behind his estate at New Place. But his life during this time was not quite unclouded. His only son, Hamnet, died in 1596 at the age of eleven years, his father in 1601, and his mother in 1608. All three were buried in Stratford. More happily he saw, in 1607, the marriage of his daughter Susanna to Dr. John Hall, an eminent physician of Stratford, and, in the following year, the baptism of his granddaughter, Elizabeth Hall.

Shakespeare's retirement to Stratford appears to have been gradual, but by 1613, if not earlier, he seems to have settled there, though he still went up to London occasionally. Of the last months of his life we know little. We do know that in February, 1616, his second daughter, Judith, married Thomas Quiney. We know that on March 25, apparently already ill,

Shakespeare revised and signed his will, among other bequests leaving to his wife his "second best bed with the furniture." A month later he was dead, dying on his fifty-second birthday, April 23, 1616. He was buried in the chancel of Holy Trinity Church, Stratford, on April 26.

HIS TIMES

Shakespeare lived during the English Renaissance, that age of transition that links the Mediaeval and the Modern world. Inheriting the rich traditions of the Middle Ages in art, learning, religion, and politics, rediscovering the great legacies of classical culture, the men of the Renaissance went on to new and magnificent achievements in every phase of human endeavour. No other period in history saw such varied and prolific development and expansion. And the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), Shakespeare's age, was the High Renaissance in England.

Development and expansion—these are the watchwords of the age, and they apply to every aspect of life, thought, and activity. The universe grew in immensity as men gradually abandoned the old Ptolemaic view of a finite, earth-centered universe, accepting the enormous intellectual challenge of the illimitable cosmos of Copernicus's theory and Galileo's telescope. The earth enlarged, too, as more of its surface was discovered and charted by explorers following the lead of Columbus, Cabot, Magellan, and Vespucci. England itself expanded as explorers and colonizers, such as Frobisher, Davis, Gilbert, Raleigh, Grenville, Drake, and others, carried the English flag into many distant lands and seas; as

English trade and commerce expanded with the opening of new markets and new sources of supply; as English sea power grew to protect the trading routes and fend off rivals, particularly Spain, the defeat of whose Invincible Armada in 1588 greatly advanced English national pride at home, and power and prestige abroad.

The world of ideas changed and expanded, too. The rediscovery and reinterpretation of the classics, with their broad and humane view of life, gave a new direction and impetus to secular education. During the Middle Ages theology had dominated education, but now the language, literature, and philosophy of the ancient world, the practical arts of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and training in morals, manners, and gymnastics assumed the major roles in both school and university—in other words, an education that fitted one for life in the world here and now replaced one that looked rather to the life hereafter. Not that the spiritual culture of man was neglected. Indeed, it took on a new significance, for as life in this world acquired new meaning and value, religion assumed new functions, and new vitality to perform them, as the bond between the Creator and a new kind of creation.

It was, of course, the old creation—man and nature—but it was undergoing great changes. Some of these we have already seen, but the greatest was in man's conception of himself and his place in nature. The Mediaeval view of man was generally not an exalted one. It saw him as more or less depraved, fallen from Grace as a result of Adam's sin; and the things of this world, which was also "fallen," as of little value in terms of his salvation. Natural life was thought of

mainly as a preparation for man's entry into Eternity. But Renaissance thought soon began to rehabilitate man, nature, and the things of this life. Without denying man's need for Grace and the value of the means of salvation provided by the Church, men came gradually to accept the idea that there were "goods," values, "innocent delights" to be had in the world here and now, and that God had given them for man to enjoy. Man himself was seen no longer as wholly vile and depraved, incapable even of desiring goodness, but rather as Shakespeare saw him in *Hamlet*:

> What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!

And this is the conception of man that permeates Elizabethan thought and literature. It does not mean that man is incorruptible, immune to moral weakness and folly. Shakespeare has his villains, cowards, and fools. But man is none of these by nature; they are distortions of the true form of man. Nature framed him for greatness, endowed him with vast capacities for knowledge, achievement, and delight, and with aspirations that may take him to the stars. "O brave new world, That has such people in 't!"

The chief object of man's aspiring mind is now the natural world, whose "wondrous architecture," says Marlowe's Tamburlaine, our souls strive ceasely to comprehend, "Still climbing after knowledge infinite." Hamlet, too, speaks of "this goodly frame, the earth

. . . this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire." No longer the ruins of a fallen paradise and the devil's, nature is seen as man's to possess, her beauty and wonder to be sought after and enjoyed, her energies to be controlled and used—as Bacon expressed it, "for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate."

It was, indeed, a very stirring time to be alive in. New vistas were breaking upon the human mind and imagination everywhere. It was a time like spring, when promise, opportunity, challenge and growth appeared where none had been dreamed of before. Perhaps this is why there is so much poetry of spring-time in the age of Shakespeare.

HIS THEATRE

There were many theatres, or playhouses, in Shakespeare's London. The first was built in 1576 by James Burbage and was called the *Theatre*. It was built like an arena, with a movable platform at one end, and had no seats in the pit, but had benches in the galleries that surrounded it. It was built of wood, and cost about £200. Other famous playhouses of Shakespeare's time, for the most part similarly constructed, included the Curtain, the Bull, the Rose, the Swan, the Fortune, and, most famous of them all, the Globe. It was built in 1599 by the sons of James Burbage, and it was here that most of Shakespeare's plays were performed. Since more is known about the Globe than most of the others, I shall use it as the basis of the brief account that follows of the Elizabethan playhouse.

As its name suggests, the Globe was a circular structure (the second Globe, built in 1614 after the first burned down, was octagonal), and was open to the sky, somewhat like a modern football or baseball stadium, though much smaller. It had three tiers of galleries surrounding the central "yard" or pit, and a narrow roof over the top gallery. But most interesting from our viewpoint was the stage—or rather *stages*—which was very different from that of most modern theatres. These have the familiar "picture-frame" stage: a raised platform at one end of the auditorium, framed by curtains and footlights, and viewed only from the front like a picture. Shakespeare's stage was very different.

The main stage, or *apron* as it was called, jutted well out into the pit, and did not extend all the way across from side to side. There was an area on either side for patrons to sit or stand in, so that actors performing on the apron could be viewed from three sides instead of one. In addition there was an inner stage, a narrow rectangular recess let into the wall behind the main stage. When not in use it could be closed by a curtain drawn across in front; when open it could be used for interior scenes, arbor scenes, tomb and anteroom scenes and the like. On either side of this inner stage were doors through which the main stage was entered. Besides the inner and outer stages, there were no fewer than four other areas where the action of the play, or parts of it, might be performed. Immediately above the inner stage, and corresponding to it in size and shape, was another room with its front exposed. This was the upper stage, and was used for upstairs scenes, or for storage

when not otherwise in use. In front of this was a narrow railed gallery, which could be used for balcony scenes, or ones requiring the walls of a castle or the ramparts of a fortress. On either side of it and on the same level was a window-stage, so-called because it consisted of a small balcony enclosed by windows that opened on hinges. This permitted actors to stand inside and speak from the open windows to others on the main stage below. In all it was a very versatile multiple stage and gave the dramatist and producer much more freedom in staging than most modern theatres afford. It is interesting to note that some of the new theatres today have revived certain of the features of the Elizabethan stage.

Very little in the way of scenery and backdrops was used. The dramatist's words and the imagination of the audience supplied the lack of scenery. No special lighting effects were possible since plays were performed in the daylight that streamed in through the unroofed top of the three-tiered enclosure that was the playhouse. Usually a few standard stage props were on hand: trestles and boards to form a table, benches and chairs, flagons, an altar, artificial trees, weapons, a man's severed head, and a few other items. Costumes were usually elaborate and gorgeous, though no attempt was made to reproduce the dress of the time and place portrayed in the play.

Play production in Shakespeare's time was clearly very different from that of ours, but we need have no doubts about the audience's response to what they saw and heard on stage. They came, they saw, and the dramatist conquered, for they kept coming back for more and more. And despite the opposition that

Shakespeare's own manuscript or from a playhouse copy, and at some points, the stage directions are given. For example, Quarto 2, Act IV, v, 102, has directions for the entrance of Will Kempe, the clown of the company, instead of the earlier version's "Enter Peter." A third Quarto, printed in 1609, was used as the basis for the First Folio, the collection of thirty-six of Shakespeare's plays printed in 1623, by John Heminges and Henry Condell, two surviving members of his company. Editors today commonly use Quarto 2 as a basis for their texts, using alternate readings from the other two printings when these seem preferable.

The story of *Romeo and Juliet* was already familiar when Shakespeare gave it the form by which our world knows it. There is little doubt that he was influenced in the writing of his play by Arthur Brooke's long blank-verse poem of a generation earlier, *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet* (1562). As Brooke mentions in his Preface having seen a stage performance, it is possible that there were other stage versions between 1562 and 1595. Brooke's poem is over three thousand lines long, and it covers some nine months in time. The background of warring families is similar as, in general, is the course of the action and the names and functions of the characters, notably excepting Mercutio, who is Shakespeare's own, unique creation.

THEME

Shakespeare's play far transcends Brooke's poem in its construction, its poetry, and in the depth and in-

sight of its character portrayal. Brooke's nine months' time span is compressed into five days of sultry summer, and each action leads so logically and so speedily to the next that the reader of the play, or its audience in the theatre, is drawn into its speedily rising tension. The quick, and seemingly inevitable, buildup to disaster is relieved only by the lyric beauty of the scenes between the lovers, in which their quickly created world is given an intensity and an added poignancy by its vulnerability to a hostile social setting and to ruinous blows by blind chance.

The Chorus-Prologue to Act I provides a capsule summary of the plot, which lays its stress upon the feud between two households "both alike in dignity" and the burying of the feud through the chastening agency of the death of the lovers:

> From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
> A pair of star-crost lovers take their life;
> Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
> Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.

It may well be that this was the stress of theme that Shakespeare intended. Much has been written on the strong Elizabethan sense of order, a total order which comprised the entire "Chain of Being" and which extended from God to the lowest creature. It is certainly demonstrable, from various plays, that Shakespeare was anything but anarchic to a feeling for the structures of society. In this play, the Prince, as the person of the Law and the upholder of the social order, intervenes twice in the action and finally closes it as the examining judge and the dispenser of justice. As he promises in the Prologue, Shakespeare makes

an important point of the resolution of the feud which, unresolved, is a constant threat to a stable social structure.

However, the modern reader is less firmly committed to any widely held conception of macrocosmic and microcosmic order. He will surely read the final scene with an ironic stress, and will reject the healing of a social breach as, in any way, a compensation for the deaths of Romeo and Juliet. Such is the strength of Shakespeare's psychological insight, and of his poetry, that his hero and heroine are timeless, their emotions identifiable as our own, and their motivations and actions only pushed to the extreme by the pressure of events upon them.

"Star-crost lovers" has two important connotations for Romeo and Juliet. They are victims of circumstances over which they are powerless, both by their births into feuding families and by a succession of chances which occur within the play. A devil-may-care braving of fate brings Romeo to the Capulets' feast, and chance decrees his meeting with Juliet at a time when they both are most susceptible to falling in love. But the other side of the coin to this fortunate accident is the quarrelsome Tybalt's witnessing of the meeting and his later seeking-out of Romeo. Again, a challenging of fate causes Mercutio to take on the quarrel, and unlucky chance brings about Romeo's intervention, Mercutio's death, the duel with Tybalt, Tybalt's death, and Romeo's subsequent banishment.

The Friar's instructions to Juliet about the taking of the potion and the timing of his message to Romeo are upset by Capulet's decision to hasten Juliet's wedding to Paris, a decision which is affected

by the death of Tybalt and Juliet's grieving, as her father supposes, for her cousin. Finally, the Friar's message to Romeo miscarries by an entirely unforeseeable but credible chance and the Friar reaches the vault too late to save Romeo and is powerless to dissuade Juliet from suicide. Once set in motion, with the feuding families as the background and ever-present agent of action, and the love of Romeo and Juliet as the foreground dynamic, the events of the play move inexorably to the catastrophe; at no time are we aware of a forcing or a straining of the pattern.

THE CHARACTERS

Romeo, when we first see him, is caught in an excess of emotion: he is in love with the *idea* of love. In his passion for the cold, distant, and beautiful Rosaline, the lunatic, the lover, and the self-conscious poet are combined: he is moody, unbalanced, and his speeches are notable for their conventional exaggeration of his sentiments, rather than for an impression of depth or sincerity of emotion. Once committed to Juliet, however, he changes: high-spirited in his happiness, gallant and constant to his love, he is even ready to parry Tybalt's insolence and to be the mediator in the quarrel between Mercutio and Tybalt. With the death of Tybalt, his happiness is ruined, and in the Friar's cell his voicing of despair is reminiscent of his exaggerating of earlier emotions, though this time his words are convincing in their sincerity and desperation of tone. The Friar pulls him out of his abandonment to grief and gives him hope and the ability to act again, but when the news of Juliet's death

reaches him, suicide is the only possible answer. To the audience, conditioned to the heights and depths of Romeo's emotions, his choice of action seems as inevitable and as pitiable as, for him, it is logical.

The character of Juliet is quite uniquely compelling, even among Shakespeare's gallery of memorable women. A prize rôle, it has proved a frustrating one for many an experienced actress, requiring, as it does, an illusion of the first freshness of youth combined with a consummate acting skill. Juliet first appears as an obedient young girl of fourteen; five days later she chooses to kill herself, having experienced in the interval a forced growth into maturity and resolve, with the most intense of accompanying emotions. She is made pathetic at first by her subservience to her parents and by the protective maunderings of the old Nurse, but with love comes a swift change from a childish girl to a self-determining woman of great resolve. She takes the lead in directing her lover to the arrangements for marriage and she is finally capable of braving all the tortures of doubt and horror to remain true to him, and of braving death itself to join him. In Juliet, beauty, grace, and dignity combine with courage, energy, and the intuitive generosity of love. Her character is as real to the mind as it is to the imagination, the essence of its beauty and resolution captured in her lines:

> And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,
> And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

The Nurse is a comic character deserving a place near to Falstaff's in the roster of Shakespeare's creations, and sharing a pedestal with Chaucer's "Wife of Bath" in English literature's gallery of female comic

characterizations. Her warm good nature, sentimentality, and garrulity are, in the first instance, an amusing foil to Lady Capulet's brittle sophistication and to Juliet's innocence. The comic side of her character remains throughout, but Juliet has to learn that her Nurse, on whom in youth she depended, will not provide the support she needs in the maturity of her love and the desperation of her situation. The most poignant lines of the play, in terms of Juliet's forced advance from innocence to experience, are those in which she finally dismisses the Nurse as a possible bulwark: "Go, counselor; /Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain."

There is a flashing and incongruous charm about the character of Mercutio which has attracted actors even more than the rôle of Romeo. It is possible that the "Queen Mab" speech was written into the text by Shakespeare to pacify some actor who clamored for a meaty part. Mercutio is witty and unpredictable; he lives as a young gallant, but he speaks with a brilliance and a range that separate him radically from the other high-born young men, Benvolio, Tybalt, and Paris. He dies with words which are either wryly ironic or pathetic in their effect, depending on the actor's reading of his part. His importance to the play is out of all proportion to the actual weight of his rôle, his quality as elusive and as timelessly intriguing as the Fairy Queen whom he describes.

Paris, Benvolio, and Tybalt are well-differentiated, though they are of approximately the same age and class. Paris is the well-bred, acceptable suitor; he appears as a well-functioning part of the social structure, conditioned to do the "right thing," whether it be to request Juliet's hand in marriage or to join her

father and mother in a chorus of lament at her death. He contrasts radically with Romeo, who is constantly daring to do the socially "wrong thing," and, fittingly, he seems most alive and demanding of our sympathy as he and Romeo confront each other at the tomb. Paris has come conventionally, to honor and mourn the dead; Romeo has come unconventionally, to snatch his wife from her family and, seemingly, from death itself.

Tybalt—unlike the other young men, who are at least as preoccupied with love, or with talk of love, as with the honor of their families—is proud and feud-obsessed, a fighting machine, not a young gallant. The "King of Cats," as Mercutio calls him, is an ominous and then a catastrophic figure in the play. Like Romeo, he is, from the first, emotionally unbalanced, but toward hate, not love; his emotions and Romeo's clash into disaster.

Benvolio's rôle is a comparatively passive one, but he is more than a playwright's tool, a characterless nonentity devised to receive confidences, to make explanations and to take messages. He is cunningly provided with speeches which give him substance, without detracting from the superior importance or appeal of Romeo or Mercutio. The gradation of differentiation among these young men is one of Shakespeare's most successful feats in *Romeo and Juliet* and one of the triumphs of its characterization.

Throughout his career, Shakespeare was in a constant process of growth and development, both as poet and playwright. It is not surprising to find that in *Romeo and Juliet*, a relatively early play, his powers were less than perfectly balanced: the skill of the plot construction and of the characterization is

more uniformly impressive than is the poetry of the play. Especially in its first part, the language is sometimes stilted, even ludicrously so, and though Romeo's declaiming is not incongruous to his character as we first see it, certain reversions to the early style strike a false note. Juliet, for instance, about whose sincerity we have no question, cries her grief at Romeo's slaying of Tybalt in oxymorons which sound strangely forced:

> Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!
> Dove-feather'd raven! wolvish-ravening lamb!

Shakespeare was still capable of being diverted from total unity of character and speech by the poet's inclination, as W. H. Auden has put it, to "hang around words and hear them talking to one another." On the other hand, in passage after passage, from the speeches of Mercutio, or Capulet, or the Nurse, and especially from the lyric scenes between the lovers, we recognize the finely balanced poet-dramatist, whose skill, like Juliet's love, is "as boundless as the sea."

STUDY QUESTIONS

ACT I

1. Write a brief report on the function of the Chorus in Classical Drama. What can you find out about the use of the Chorus in English Drama?
2. What do you learn from a reading of the Chorus-Prologues to Act I and Act II? What purposes do you suppose these prologues served to the audiences of Shakespeare's day?
3. Read all of Act I, and then tell in what ways the preliminary street fight is an effectively dramatic beginning to the action.
4. Describe your impressions of Romeo from his words and his actions as recorded in Act I.
5. Juliet is first shown to the audience with the two women who have certainly influenced her most—her mother and her Nurse. What do you find out about each of these two in Act I, Scene iii?
6. The character of Mercutio appears only in Shakespeare's version of the story of Romeo and Juliet. Why do you suppose Shakespeare invented him? In what ways is he effective in Act I?
7. Read Mercutio's speech on Queen Mab (Act I, Sc. iv); find out what you can on Queen Mab from other sources, and write a short essay on her place in folklore and her recurrence in literature.
8. By the end of Act I what impressions do you have of Juliet, from her own words, and from the speeches of other characters to and about her?

ACT II

1. The balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet* has often been called the most beautiful love scene ever written. Discuss the contributions of the characters, the setting, and the dialogue to its perfection.
2. Analyze the imagery in Romeo's two speeches (Sc. ii), to show that all of his praises of Juliet and her beauty develop from his first thought as he sees her at the window: "Juliet is the sun."
3. Contrast Romeo's speeches throughout Act II, Sc. ii with his earlier speeches about love in Act I, Sc. i and ii. What differences do you find in the kinds of verse, the language, the sentiments expressed and the general tone?
4. Write a sketch of Friar Lawrence as he appears in Act II.
5. What ominous notes do you find introduced into Act II to indicate that the future may not be bright for the lovers?
6. What impressions do you get of the functions and authority of the Church through the words and actions of the Friar in Act II?
7. How has Juliet's character been developed and revealed between the end of Act I and the end of Act II?
8. Indicate the various places in Act II where Shakespeare has introduced variety in tone and mood. Show how he has done this, while still advancing the action of his play.

ACT III

1. In what way is the action of Act III, Sc. i vital to the main plot of the play? Give at least two instances from previous speech and action where we have been prepared for these events.
2. Act III, Sc. i: Romeo says "O! I am Fortune's fool." Check carefully through Romeo's speeches in Acts I and II. Has he had premonitions of disaster before?
3. Trace the course of Juliet's emotional reactions upon hearing that Romeo has slain Tybalt and has been banished: Act III, Sc. ii.
4. Contrast Scene iii, Romeo and the Friar, to the previous scene between Juliet and her Nurse.
5. As a director of *Romeo and Juliet,* how would you cast Benvolio, Mercutio, and Tybalt so as to accentuate their different characteristics?
6. The scene between Juliet and her parents is a revelation, or a series of revelations, on each one of the three characters. Comment, supporting your answer with references to earlier scenes, as well as to this one.
7. Why would a critic say that when Juliet says "Amen" to the Nurse (Sc. v), she has finally and irrevocably passed from youth to maturity, from innocence to experience?
8. Can you think of any justification on Shakespeare's part for Romeo's pun on the word "fly" (Sc. iii)? Find other and more effective uses of various creatures of nature in his speeches in Act III.
9. Identify the figure of speech used repeatedly by

Juliet in Sc. ii, and comment on its effectiveness, or lack of effectiveness, at this crisis in the play.

ACT IV

1. What scheme does Friar Lawrence propose to help Romeo and Juliet, and what, exactly, are the time elements involved in it? What is the cause of a change in the schedule?
2. Analyze Juliet's speech, Sc. iii, showing the course of her fears, and the hardening of her resolve to follow the Friar's plan.
3. Describe Scene iv, commenting on the attractiveness of its portrayal of Capulet, Lady Capulet, and the Nurse, and on its ironic effect.
4. The part of Peter, who enters in Sc. v, was originally played by Will Kempe, a very popular comic actor. What reasons do you suppose Shakespeare had for introducing such a scene and such an actor at this point in the play?
5. Do you find Capulet's expressions of grief at Juliet's death as convincing as his anger over her earlier refusal to marry? Compare Act III, Sc. v and Act. IV, Sc. v.
6. The Nurse does not appear in the play again after Act IV, Sc. v. What are Shakespeare's probable reasons for withdrawing her at this point in the action?

ACT V

1. In Act V, Scene i, Romeo describes the Apothecary and his Shop, and then calls the Apothecary, who

enters immediately. Paraphrase this scene (V, i) and tell how it adds to the effectiveness of the drama and to the economy of its design.

2. Pick out and comment on some of the lines in Scene iii which establish its setting and promote feelings of fear, dread, and pity in the audience.
3. Suggest Shakespeare's reasons for the confrontation of Romeo and Paris and for the latter's death. What does this scene add to the culminating effect of the drama?
4. Act V, Sc. iii is played at night, as was the Balcony Scene, Act II, Sc. ii. List some descriptive words and phrases in these scenes which give the audience the impression of the gloom and horror of the one night, and the beauty and brightness of the other.
5. Suggest some of the purposes served by the final passage of the play (Act V, Sc. iii) and discuss the dramatic effectiveness of these last two hundred lines.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. "A pair of star-crost lovers": Write an essay on the elements of mischance which are completely outside the capacity of Romeo and Juliet to control and which are the instruments of their catastrophe.
2. When the play ends, the Prince has not announced whether the Friar is to be pardoned or punished for his part in the tragedy. Write an essay on the Friar's rôle throughout the play, finally coming to your own decision as to his degree of guilt and responsibility for the tragedy.
3. Discuss the three forces of the state, the family, and the church as background and as causal factors in the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet.*
4. Write an essay on the rôle of the Nurse throughout the play. Consider the ways in which she adds elements of realism, of humor, and of pathos to the action.
5. Make a detailed time chart of the action in *Romeo and Juliet.*
6. "You may, indeed, take any sentence the Nurse speaks throughout the play, and only she could speak it."—H. Granville-Barker. Trace the development of your impression of the Nurse, showing how her character reveals itself as she speaks in the present, but often recollecting the past.
7. Write an essay on the character of either Romeo

or Juliet. Show how either character develops throughout the play, and document your findings by specific references.

8. Write an essay on *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet.* Comment on certain similarities which you will find between Romeo and Hamlet. Devote the major portion of your essay, however, to a discussion of the important differences between the two rôles.

9. Write an essay on "The Poetry of *Romeo and Juliet.*" Explain carefully the effectiveness of its imagery, choosing your examples from the speeches of different characters and from at least five of the following categories: night, the moon, the sun, the stars, animal life, death and decay, fairyland, the sea, flowers, classical mythology, birds, war.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

A. C. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy* (1904)
G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire* (1930)
Robert B. Heilman, *Magic in the Web* (1956)
F. R. Leavis, *The Common Pursuit* (1952)
J. Dover Wilson, *The Essential Shakespeare* (1930)
G. Sanders, *A Shakespeare Primer* (1945)

ROMEO AND JULIET

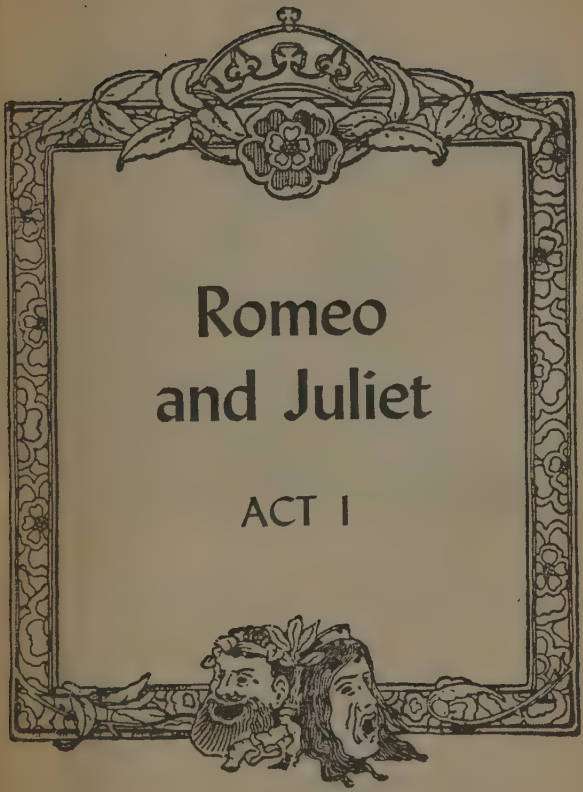
DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ESCALUS, *prince of Verona.*
PARIS, *a young nobleman, kinsman to the prince.*
MONTAGUE, } *heads of two houses at variance with*
CAPULET, } *each other.*
AN OLD MAN, *of the Capulet family.*
ROMEO, *son to Montague.*
MERCUTIO, *kinsman to the prince, and friend to Romeo.*
BENVOLIO, *nephew to Montague, and friend to Romeo.*
TYBALT, *nephew to Lady Capulet.*
FRIAR LAWRENCE, *a Franciscan.*
FRIAR JOHN, *of the same order.*
BALTHASAR, *servant to Romeo.*
SAMPSON, } *servants to Capulet.*
GREGORY, }
PETER, *servant to Juliet's nurse.*
ABRAHAM, *servant to Montague.*
AN APOTHECARY.
THREE MUSICIANS.
PAGE *to Paris; another* PAGE; *an* OFFICER.

LADY MONTAGUE, *wife to Montague.*
LADY CAPULET, *wife to Capulet.*
JULIET, *daughter to Capulet.*
NURSE *to Juliet.*

CITIZENS *of Verona;* KINSFOLK *of both houses;* MASKERS, GUARDS, WATCHMEN, *and* ATTENDANTS. CHORUS.

SCENE—*Verona; once, in Act Five, at Mantua.*



Romeo and Juliet

ACT I

ACT I

A STREET BRAWL, begun by the servants of the feuding houses of Montague and Capulet, is carried on by two young nobles, Benvolio of the Montagues and Tybalt of the Capulets. The fracas is ended by the Prince of Verona, who charges Montague and Capulet to keep the peace upon pain of death. Romeo, son of Montague, is melancholy because of his unrequited love for Rosaline, a young woman of the Capulet house. His friends, Benvolio and Mercutio, accompany him to a masquerade ball at Capulet's palace where Tybalt is restrained by his uncle, Capulet, from challenging the interlopers. Juliet, the young daughter of Capulet, is sought in marriage by Paris, who has received Capulet's consent to the match. She is young, indifferent to Paris and to thoughts of marriage, though ready to be acquiescent to her father's wishes. At the ball, she meets Romeo; a dance, some playful dialogue and a kiss, and Romeo and Juliet are irrevocably in love. She and Romeo are both dismayed when they subsequently learn each other's identity.

PROLOGUE.

Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS.

Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-crost[1] lovers take their life;
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, naught could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend. [*Exit.*

ACT I. SCENE I.

Verona. A public place.

Enter SAMPSON *and* GREGORY, *of the house of* CAPULET, *with swords and bucklers.*[2]

SAMPSON.

Gregory, o' my word, we'll not carry coals.[3]

GREGORY.

No, for then we should be colliers.[4]

---

[1] **star-crost:** ill-fated.
[2] **bucklers:** small shields.
[3] **carry coals:** be humiliated; carrying coal and wood was for menials.
[4] **colliers:** a play on "coals"; workers in coal (an insulting term).

SAMPSON.

I mean, an[1] we be in choler,[2] we'll draw.

GREGORY.

Ay, while you live, draw your neck out o' th' collar.[3]

SAMPSON.

I strike quickly, being moved.[4]

GREGORY.

But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

SAMPSON.

A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

GREGORY.

To move is to stir; and to be valiant is to stand: therefore, if thou art moved, thou runn'st away.

SAMPSON.

A dog of that house shall move me to stand: I will take the wall of[5] any man or maid of Montague's.

GREGORY.

That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes to the wall.

SAMPSON.

'Tis true; and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, are ever thrust to the wall:—therefore I will push Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids to the wall.

GREGORY.

The quarrel is between our masters and us their men.

SAMPSON.

'Tis all one, I will show myself a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be cruel with the maids, and cut off their heads.

GREGORY.

The heads of the maids?

---

[1] **an**: if. [2] **in choler**: angry; in a rage. [3] **collar**: noose. [4] **moved**: angered; aroused. [5] **take the wall of**: be superior to; those of higher rank were accorded the privilege of walking next to the wall (the safest and cleanest place on the street).

SAMPSON.

Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads; take it in what sense thou wilt.

GREGORY.

They must take it in sense that feel it.

SAMPSON.

Me they shall feel while I am able to stand: and 'tis known I am a pretty piece of flesh.

GREGORY.

'Tis well thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been Poor-John.[1]—Draw thy tool;[2] here comes two of the house of the Montagues.

Enter ABRAHAM *and* BALTHASAR, *two* SERVINGMEN *of the* MONTAGUES.

SAMPSON.

My naked [3] weapon is out: quarrel; I will back thee.

GREGORY.

How! turn thy back and run?

SAMPSON.

Fear me not.

GREGORY.

No, marry;[4] I fear thee!

SAMPSON.

Let us take the law of our sides; let them begin.

GREGORY.

I will frown as I pass by; and let them take it as they list.[5]

SAMPSON.

Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them;[6] which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.

---

[1] **Poor-John:** salted codfish, a staple diet for the poorer classes during Lent. [2] **tool:** sword. [3] **naked:** unsheathed. [4] **marry:** by the Virgin Mary (a mild oath). [5] **list:** please. [6] **I will bite my thumb at them:** an insulting gesture to provoke a fight.

ABRAHAM.

Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON.

I do bite my thumb, sir.

ABRAHAM.

Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON [*aside to* GREGORY].

Is the law of our side, if I say ay?

GREGORY [*aside to* SAMPSON].

No.

SAMPSON.

No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir; but I bite my thumb, sir.

GREGORY.

Do you quarrel, sir?

ABRAHAM.

Quarrel, sir! no, sir.

SAMPSON.

If you do, sir, I am for you; I serve as good a man as you.

ABRAHAM.

No better.

SAMPSON.

Well, sir.

GREGORY [*aside to* SAMPSON].

Say 'better': here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

SAMPSON.

Yes, better, sir.

ABRAHAM.

You lie.

SAMPSON.

Draw, if you be men.—Gregory, remember thy swashing[1] blow. [*They fight.*

---

[1] swashing: smashing; overpowering.

Enter BENVOLIO.

BENVOLIO.

Part, fools! [*Beats down their swords.*
Put up your swords; you know not what you do. .

Enter TYBALT.

TYBALT.

What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds? [1]
Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

BENVOLIO.

I do but keep the peace: put up thy sword,
Or manage it to part these men with me.

TYBALT.

What, drawn, and talk of peace! I hate the word,
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee:
Have at thee,[2] coward! [*They fight.*

Enter several of both houses, who join the fray; then enter three or four CITIZENS *with clubs.*

CITIZENS.

Clubs, bills,[3] and partisans! [4] strike! beat them down!
Down with the Capulets! down with the Montagues!

Enter old CAPULET *in his gown,*[5] *and* LADY CAPULET.

CAPULET.

What noise is this?—Give me my long sword, ho!

LADY CAPULET.

A crutch, a crutch!—why call you for a sword?

CAPULET.

My sword, I say!—Old Montague is come,
And flourishes his blade in spite[6] of me.

Enter old MONTAGUE *and* LADY MONTAGUE.

---

[1] **heartless hinds:** heartless is a play on *hart,* and hinds (menials) a play on *hind,* a female deer. [2] **Have at thee:** on your guard. [3] **bills:** pikes or halberts (weapons often used by watchmen). [4] **partisans:** sharp two-edged swords on staffs. [5] **gown:** this would indicate that Capulet was awakened from sleep. [6] **in spite:** in defiance.

MONTAGUE.

Thou villain Capulet!—Hold me not, let me go.

LADY MONTAGUE.

Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.

Enter PRINCE ESCALUS *with his* TRAIN.

PRINCE ESCALUS.

Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
Profaners of this neighbour-stained steel,—
Will they not hear?—what, ho! you men, you beasts,
That quench the fire of your pernicious rage
With purple fountains issuing from your veins,—
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands
Throw your mistemper'd weapons[1] to the ground,
And hear the sentence of your moved prince.
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets,
And made Verona's ancient citizens
Cast-by their grave beseeming ornaments,[2]
To wield old partisans, in hands as old,
Canker'd with peace, to part your canker'd hate:[3]
If ever you disturb our streets again,
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.[4]
For this time, all the rest depart away:—
You, Capulet, shall go along with me;—
And, Montague, come you this afternoon,
To know our further pleasure in this case,
To old Freetown, our common judgement-place.—
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

[*Exeunt all but* MONTAGUE, LADY MONTAGUE, *and* BENVOLIO.

---

[1] **mistemper'd weapons:** i.e., the steel of the weapons was hardened for a bad purpose. [2] **grave beseeming ornaments:** fitting gravity of manner. [3] **Canker'd with peace, to part your canker'd hate:** that is, rust through the years of peace has eaten into the partisans, just as hate has festered in the old enemies [4] **forfeit of the peace:** penalty for disturbing the peace.

MONTAGUE.

Who set this ancient quarrel new abroach? [1]—
Speak, nephew, were you by when it began?

BENVOLIO.

Here were the servants of your adversary,
And yours, close fighting, ere I did approach:
I drew to part them: in the instant came
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepared,
Which, as he breathed defiance to my ears,
He swung about his head, and cut the winds,
Who, nothing hurt withal, hist[2] him in scorn:
While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,
Came more and more, and fought on part and part,
Till the prince came, who parted either part.

LADY MONTAGUE.

O, where is Romeo?—saw you him to-day?—
Right glad am I he was not at this fray.

BENVOLIO.

Madam, an hour before the worshipt sun
Peer'd forth the golden window of the east,
A troubled mind drave[3] me to walk abroad;
Where—underneath the grove of sycamore
That westward rooteth from the city's side—
So early walking did I see your son:
Towards him I made; but he was ware of me,
And stole into the covert[4] of the wood:
I, measuring his affections[5] by my own,
Which then most sought where most might not be found,
Being one too many by my weary self,
Pursued my humour, not pursuing his,
And gladly shunn'd who gladly fled from me.

---

[1] **set . . . new abroach:** set on; incited anew.
[2] **hist:** hissed; jeered.
[3] **drave:** drove; impelled.
[4] **covert:** hiding cover.
[5] **affections:** wishes; inclinations.

MONTAGUE.

Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs:
But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
Should in the farthest east begin to draw
The shady curtains from Aurora's[1] bed,
Away from light steals home my heavy son,
And private in his chamber pens himself;
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out,
And makes himself an artificial night:
Black and portentous must this humour prove,
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

BENVOLIO.

My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

MONTAGUE.

I neither know it nor can learn of him.

BENVOLIO.

Have you importuned him by any means?

MONTAGUE.

Both by myself and many other friends:
But he, his own affections' counsellor,
Is to himself,—I will not say how true,—
But to himself so secret and so close,[2]
So far from sounding[3] and discovery,
As is the bud bit with an envious worm,
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
Or dedicate his beauty to the sun.
Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow,
We would as willingly give cure as know.

Enter ROMEO.

---

[1] **Aurora**: in Roman mythology, the goddess of the dawn.
[2] **so secret and so close**: so secretive and reticent.
[3] **sounding**: fathoming; understanding.

BENVOLIO.

See, where he comes: so please you, step aside;
I'll know his grievance, or be much denied.

MONTAGUE.

I would thou wert so happy by thy stay
To hear true shrift.[1]—Come, madam, let's away.

[*Exeunt* MONTAGUE *and* LADY.

BENVOLIO.

Good morrow, cousin.

ROMEO.

Is the day so young?

BENVOLIO.

But new struck nine.

ROMEO.

Ay me! sad hours seem long.
Was that my father that went hence so fast?

BENVOLIO.

It was.—What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?

ROMEO.

Not having that which, having, makes them short.

BENVOLIO.

In love?

ROMEO.

Out—

BENVOLIO.

Of love?

ROMEO.

Out of her favour, where I am in love.

BENVOLIO.

Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,[2]
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof![3]

ROMEO.

Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,
Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will![4]—

---

[1] **shrift**: confession.
[2] **in his view**: in its glance.
[3] **proof**: reality; experience.
[4] **Should . . . will**: Romeo laments that Cupid, though blindfolded, is able to perceive the road to love that he (Romeo) is forbidden to follow.

Where shall we dine?—O me!—What fray was here?
Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.
Here's much to do with hate, but more with love:[1]
Why, then, O brawling love! [2] O loving hate!
O any thing, of nothing first create!
O heavy lightness! serious vanity! [3]
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!—
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
Dost thou not laugh?

BENVOLIO.

No, coz,[4] I rather weep.

ROMEO.

Good heart, at what?

BENVOLIO.

At thy good heart's oppression.

ROMEO.

Why, such is love's transgression.—
Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast;
Which thou wilt propagate, to have it prest[5]
With more of thine: this love, that thou hast shown,
Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.
Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;
Being purged,[6] a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
Being vext, a sea nourisht with lovers' tears:
What is it else? a madness most discreet,
A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.—
Farewell, my coz.

---

[1] **Here's much . . . love:** the quarreling has much to do with the old hatred between the two families, but it affects Romeo more, as he is in love with a Capulet. [2] **O brawling love, etc.:** Romeo chooses to be facetious, thereby proving that he is not deeply in love with Rosaline. [3] **vanity:** frivolity. [4] **coz:** cousin—a title used for almost any degree of kinship. [5] **prest:** burdened. [6] **purged:** purified (of smoke).

BENVOLIO.

Soft! [1] I will go along:
An if you leave me so, you do me wrong.

ROMEO.

Tut, I have lost myself; I am not here;
This is not Romeo, he's some other where.

BENVOLIO.

Tell me in sadness,[2] who is that you love.

ROMEO.

What, shall I groan, and tell thee?

BENVOLIO.

Groan! why, no;
But sadly tell me who.

ROMEO.

Bid a sick man in sadness make his will,—
Ah, word ill urged [3] to one that is so ill!—
In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

BENVOLIO.

I aim'd so near, when I supposed you loved.

ROMEO.

A right good mark-man!—And she's fair I love.

BENVOLIO.

A right fair mark, fair coz, is soonest hit.

ROMEO.

Well, in that hit you miss: she'll not be hit
With Cupid's arrow,—she hath Dian's wit;[4]
And, in strong proof [5] of chastity well arm'd,
From love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd.
She will not stay[6] the siege of loving terms,
Nor bide th'encounter of assailing eyes,
Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold:[7]
O, she is rich in beauty; only poor,
That, when she dies, with beauty dies her store.[8]

---

[1] Soft: wait. [2] in sadness: without so much facetiousness; seriously. [3] ill-urged: unseemly; out of place. [4] Dian's wit: Diana's wisdom; Diana, the huntress goddess, was also known as the virgin goddess. [5] proof: protection. [6] stay: abide; endure. [7] saint-seducing gold: Zeus's seduction of Danaë in the form of a golden shower. [8] store: her riches of beauty and desirability.

BENVOLIO.

Then she hath sworn that she will still [1] live chaste?

ROMEO.

She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste;
For beauty, starved with her severity,
Cuts beauty off from all posterity.
She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair,
To merit bliss by making me despair:
She hath forsworn to[2] love; and in that vow
Do I live dead that live to tell it now.

BENVOLIO.

Be ruled by me,[3] forget to think of her.

ROMEO.

O, teach me how I should forget to think.

BENVOLIO.

By giving liberty unto thine eyes;
Examine other beauties.

ROMEO.

'Tis the way
To call hers, exquisite, in question more:[4]
These happy masks that kiss fair ladies' brows,
Being black, put us in mind they hide the fair;
He that is strucken blind cannot forget
The precious treasure of his eyesight lost:
Show me a mistress that is passing[5] fair,
What doth her beauty serve, but as a note
Where I may read who past that passing fair?
Farewell: thou canst not teach me to forget.

BENVOLIO.

I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.[6] [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] **still**: continue to; always. [2] **forsworn to**: vowed not to; renounced. [3] **Be ruled by me**: take my advice. [4] **'Tis the way/ To call hers, exquisite, in question more**: that is the way to discover her beauty to be even more exquisite. [5] **passing**: surpassingly. [6] **I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt**: I'll prove that I can, or die trying.

Scene II.

A street.

Enter CAPULET, COUNTY [1] PARIS, *and* SERVANT.

CAPULET.

But Montague is bound as well as I,
In penalty alike; and 'tis not hard, I think,
For men so old as we to keep the peace.

PARIS.

Of honourable reckoning[2] are you both;
And pity 'tis you lived at odds so long.
But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?

CAPULET.

But saying o'er what I have said before:
My child is yet a stranger to the world,
She hath not seen the change of fourteen years;
Let two more summers wither in their pride
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.

PARIS.

Younger than she are happy mothers made.

CAPULET.

And too soon marr'd are those so early made.[3]
The earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she,[4]
She is the hopeful lady of my earth:[5]
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
My will to her consent is but a part;[6]
An she agree, within her scope of choice
Lies my consent and fair-according voice.
This night I hold an old-accustom'd feast,
Whereto I have invited many a guest,
Such as I love; and you, among the store,
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.

---

[1] **County:** count. [2] **honourable reckoning:** honorable estimation; that is, well thought of. [3] **And too soon . . . made:** that is, girls who marry very young and become mothers lose their beauty too soon. [4] **The earth . . . she:** all his children but Juliet are dead. [5] **hopeful . . . earth:** all my hopes are centered in Juliet. [6] **My will . . . part:** Delius explains this passage as "my will is only a part of her consent, belongs to her consent."

At my poor house look to behold this night
Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light:
Such comfort as do lusty young men[1] feel
When well-apparell'd April on the heel
Of limping Winter treads, even such delight
Among fresh female buds shall you this night
Inherit[2] at my house; hear all, all see,
And like her most whose merit most shall be:
Which on more view of many, mine, being one,
May stand in number, though in reckoning none.[3]
Come, go with me.—[*to the* SERVANT, *giving him a paper*]
Go, sirrah, trudge about
Through fair Verona; find those persons out
Whose names are written there, and to them say,
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.[4]

[*Exeunt* CAPULET *and* PARIS.

SERVANT.

Find them out whose names are written here! It is written that the shoemaker should meddle with[5] his yard,[6] and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his pencil,[7] and the painter with his nets; but I am sent to find those persons whose names are here writ, and can never find what names the writing person hath here writ. I must to the learned:—in good time.

Enter BENVOLIO *and* ROMEO.

BENVOLIO.

Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning,
One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish;
Turn giddy, and be holp[8] by backward turning;
One desperate grief cures with another's languish:
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,

---

[1] **lusty young men:** young men has been explained by Johnson as a misprint for *yeomen* (farmers) who would be happy at the prospect of spring. [2] **inherit:** possess. [3] **May stand . . . none:** the meaning of this passage is obscure. [4] **on their pleasure stay:** await the pleasure of their company. [5] **meddle with:** be concerned with. [6] **yard:** yardstick. [7] **pencil:** brush. [8] **holp:** helped.

And the rank poison of the old will die.

ROMEO.

Your plaintain-leaf[1] is excellent for that.

BENVOLIO.

For what, I pray thee?

ROMEO.

For your broken shin.

BENVOLIO.

Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

ROMEO.

Not mad, but bound more than a madman is;
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,
Whipt and tormented, and—God-den, good fellow.

SERVANT.

God gi' god-den.[2]—I pray, sir, can you read?

ROMEO.

Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

SERVANT.

Perhaps you have learn'd it without book: but, I pray, can you read any thing you see?

ROMEO.

Ay, if I know the letters and the language.

SERVANT.

Ye say honestly: rest you merry![3]

ROMEO.

Stay, fellow; I can read. [*He reads the paper.*

'Signior Martino and his wife and daughters; County Anselme and his beauteous sisters; the lady widow of Vitruvio; Signior Placentio and his lovely nieces; Mercutio and his brother Valentine; mine uncle Capulet, his wife, and daugh-

---

[1] **plaintain-leaf**: in Shakespeare's time, the leaves of the plaintain were used for staunching blood from fresh wounds.

[2] **God gi' god-den**: God give you good evening.

[3] **rest you merry!**: a salutation usually made at parting; the clown, thinking that Romeo is a jester who cannot read, is about to leave him.

ters; my fair niece Rosaline; Livia; Signior Valentio and his cousin Tybalt; Lucio and the lively Helena.'

[*Giving back the paper.*

A fair assembly: whither should they come?

SERVANT.

Up.

ROMEO.

Whither?

SERVANT.

To supper to our house.

ROMEO.

Whose house?

SERVANT.

My master's.

ROMEO.

Indeed, I should have askt you that before.

SERVANT.

Now I'll tell you without asking: my master is the great rich Capulet; and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray, come and crush a cup[1] of wine. Rest you merry! [*Exit.*

BENVOLIO.

At this same ancient feast of Capulet's
Sups the fair Rosaline whom thou so lovest;
With all the admired beauties of Verona:
Go thither; and, with unattainted [2] eye,
Compare her face with some that I shall show,
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

ROMEO.

When the devout religion of mine eye
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires;
And these,—who, often drown'd,[3] could never die,—

---

[1] **crush a cup:** have a drink (a common expression of the time).
[2] **unattainted:** unbiased.
[3] **these (eyes),—who, often drown'd:** these eyes of mine which have often drowned in tears.

Transparent heretics,[1] be burnt for liars!
One fairer than my love! the all-seeing sun
Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.

BENVOLIO.

Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself poised [2] with herself in either eye:
But in that crystal scales let there be weigh'd
Your lady-love against some other maid
That I will show you shining at this feast,
And she shall scant[3] show well that now shows best.

ROMEO.

I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,
But to rejoice in splendour of mine own.[4] *[Exeunt.*

Scene III.

A room in CAPULET'S *house.*

Enter LADY CAPULET *and* NURSE.

LADY CAPULET.

Nurse, where's my daughter? call her forth to me.

NURSE.

Now, by my maidenhead,—at twelve year old,—
I bade her come. What, lamb! what, lady-bird! [5]
God forbid!—where's this girl?—What, Juliet!

Enter JULIET.

JULIET.

How now! who calls?

NURSE.

Your mother.

JULIET.

Madam, I am here. What is your will?

---

[1] **Transparent heretics:** clearly seen-through unbelievers.
[2] **poised:** compared.
[3] **scant:** barely.
[4] **splendour of mine own:** the beauty of my own love.
[5] **lady-bird:** an allusion to Juliet's flying around like a bird, always hard to find when wanted (a ladybird is also a beetle).

LADY CAPULET.

This is the matter,—nurse, give leave awhile,[1]
We must talk in secret:—nurse, come back again;
I have remember'd me, thou's[2] hear our council.
Thou know'st my daughter's of a pretty age.[3]

NURSE.

Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

LADY CAPULET.

She's not fourteen.

NURSE.

I'll lay fourteen of my teeth,—and yet, to my teen[4] be it spoken, I have but four,—she's not fourteen. How long is it now to Lammas-tide? [5]

LADY CAPULET.

A fortnight and odd days.

NURSE.

Even or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen.
Susan and she—God rest all Christian souls!—
Were of an age: well, Susan is with God;
She was too good for me:—but, as I said,
On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen;
That shall she, marry; I remember it well.
'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years;
And she was wean'd,—I never shall forget it,—
Of all the days of the year, upon that day:
For I had then laid wormwood [6] to my dug,[7]
Sitting in the sun under the dove-house wall;
My lord and you were then at Mantua:—
Nay, I do bear a brain:—but, as I said,
When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple
Of my dug, and felt it bitter, pretty fool,
To see it tetchy,[8] and fall out with the dug!

---

[1] **give leave awhile:** leave us alone for a while. [2] **thou's:** you shall. [3] **pretty age:** marriageable age. [4] **teen:** grief; sorrow. [5] **Lammas-tide:** Lammas-time—August 1—a holy feast day. [6] **wormwood:** a bitter herb. [7] **dug:** breast. [8] **tetchy:** irritable.

Shake, quoth the dove-house:[1] 'twas no need, I trow,[2]
To bid me trudge:
And since that time it is eleven years;
For then she could stand high-lone;[3] nay, by th' rood,[4]
She could have run and waddled all about;
For even the day before, she broke her brow:[5]
And then my husband—God be with his soul!
A'[6] was a merry man—took up the child:
'Yea,' quoth he, 'dost thou fall upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit;[7]
Wilt thou not, Jule?' and, by my holidame,[8]
The pretty wretch left crying, and said 'Ay.'
To see, now, how a jest shall come about!
I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,
I never should forget it: 'Wilt thou not, Jule?' quoth he;
And, pretty fool, it stinted,[9] and said 'Ay.'

LADY CAPULET.

Enough of this; I pray thee, hold thy peace.

NURSE.

Yes, madam:—yet I cannot choose but laugh,
To think it should leave crying, and say 'Ay':
And yet, I warrant, it had upon it brow
A bump as big as a young cockerel's stone;
A perilous knock; and it cried bitterly:
'Yea,' quoth my husband, 'fall'st upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward when thou comest to age;
Wilt thou not, Jule?' it stinted, and said 'Ay.'

JULIET.

And stint thou too, I pray thee, nurse, say I.

---

[1] **Shake, quoth the dove-house:** a reference to the earthquake felt in England in 1580. [2] **trow:** declare. [3] **stand high-lone:** stand alone. [4] **rood:** cross. [5] **broke her brow:** i.e., cut her forehead in a fall. [6] **A':** he. [7] **wit:** wisdom. [8] **holidame:** salvation (used in oaths). [9] **stinted:** stopped crying.

NURSE.

Peace, I have done. God mark thee to His grace!
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nursed;
An I might live to see thee married once,
I have my wish.

LADY CAPULET.

Marry, that 'marry' is the very theme
I came to talk of:—tell me, daughter Juliet,
How stands your disposition to be married?

JULIET.

It is an honour that I dream not of.

NURSE.

An honour! were not I thine only nurse,
I would say thou hadst suckt wisdom from thy teat.

LADY CAPULET.

Well, think of marriage now; younger than you,
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,
Are made already mothers: by my count,
I was your mother much upon these years[1]
That you are now a maid. Thus, then, in brief;—
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

NURSE.

A man, young lady! lady, such a man
As all the world—why, he's a man of wax.[2]

LADY CAPULET.

Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

NURSE.

Nay, he's a flower; in faith, a very flower.

LADY CAPULET.

What say you? can you love the gentleman?
This night you shall behold him at our feast;
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen

---

[1] much upon these years: at about your age.
[2] man of wax: a model of a man; as perfect as if modeled in wax by an artist.

Examine every married lineament,[1]
And see how one another lends content;
And what obscured in this fair volume lies
Find written in the margent[2] of his eyes.
This precious book of love, this unbound lover,
To beautify him only lacks a cover:[3]
The fish lives in the sea; and 'tis much pride
For fair without the fair within to hide:[4]
That book in many's eyes doth share the glory,
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story;
So shall you share all that he doth possess,
By having him, making yourself no less.

NURSE.

No less! nay, bigger; women grow by men.

LADY CAPULET.

Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

JULIET.

I'll look to like,[5] if looking liking move:[6]
But no more deep will I endart[7] mine eye
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

Enter a SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Madam, the guests are come, supper served up, you call'd, my young lady askt for, the nurse curst in the pantry, and every thing in extremity. I must hence to wait; I beseech you, follow straight.

LADY CAPULET.

We follow thee. [*Exit* SERVANT.]—Juliet, the county stays.[8]

NURSE.

Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days. [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] **married lineament:** happily married features; harmony of features. [2] **margent:** explanatory comments were written on the margins of old books. [3] **cover:** a play on the French law phrase for a married woman—*feme covert*. [4] **For fair . . . hide:** to have a handsome person to cover a virtuous mind. [5] **I'll look to like:** I shall try to like him. [6] **move:** causes affection. [7] **endart:** dart; cast. [8] **stays:** awaits.

Scene IV.

A street.

Enter ROMEO, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, *with five or six other* MASKERS, *and* TORCH-BEARERS.

ROMEO.

What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse? [1]
Or shall we on without apology?

BENVOLIO.

The date is out of such prolixity:[2]
We'll have no Cupid hoodwinkt[3] with a scarf,
Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,[4]
Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper;[5]
Nor no without-book prologue,[6] faintly spoke
After the prompter, for our entrance:
But, let them measure us by what they will,
We'll measure them a measure, and be gone.

ROMEO.

Give me a torch, I am not for this ambling;
Being but heavy,[7] I will bear the light.

MERCUTIO.

Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

ROMEO.

Not I, believe me: you have dancing-shoes
With nimble soles: I have a soul of lead,
So stakes me to the ground I cannot move.

MERCUTIO.

You are a lover; borrow Cupid's wings,
And soar with them above a common bound.

ROMEO.

I am too sore enpierced [8] with his shaft,
To soar with his light feathers; and so bound,

---

[1] **spoke for our excuse:** in other words, shall we make a formal introduction of the maskers. [2] **The date . . . prolixity:** wordiness is out of date. [3] **hoodwinkt:** blindfolded. [4] **painted bow of lath:** a bow shaped like a Cupid's bow. [5] **crow-keeper:** a scarecrow. [6] **without-book prologue:** prologue by someone other than the poet and not in the book. [7] **but heavy:** heavy with sadness. [8] **enpierced:** impierced.

I cannot bound [1] a pitch[2] above dull woe:
Under love's heavy burden do I sink.

MERCUTIO.

And, to sink in it, should you burden love;
Too great oppression for a tender thing.

ROMEO.

Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,
Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn.

MERCUTIO.

If love be rough with you, be rough with love;
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.—
Give me a case to put my visage in: [*Putting on a mask.*
A visor[3] for a visor!—what care I
What curious eye doth quote[4] deformities?
Here are the beetle-brows shall blush for me.

BENVOLIO.

Come, knock and enter; and no sooner in,
But every man betake him to his legs.

ROMEO.

A torch for me: let wantons,[5] light of heart,
Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels;
For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase,[6]—
I'll be a candle-holder, and look on,—
The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.

MERCUTIO.

Tut, dun's the mouse,[7] the constable's own word:
If thou art Dun, we'll draw thee from the mire[8]
Of this sir-reverence love, wherein thou stick'st
Up to the ears.—Come, we burn daylight,[9] ho!

ROMEO.

Nay, that's not so.

---

[1] **bound**: leap. [2] **pitch**: a term in falconry to denote the height of the hawk's flight. [3] **visor**: mask. [4] **quote**: take notice of. [5] **wantons**: pleasure-seekers. [6] **grandsire phrase**: "to hold the candle" is to be a mere looker-on. [7] **dun's the mouse**: lie low; stay quiet. [8] **we'll draw . . . mire**: an allusion to the old Christmas game of *Dun in the Mire*. [9] **burn daylight**: waste time.

MERCUTIO.

I mean, sir, in delay
We waste our lights in vain, like lamps by day.
Take our good meaning, for our judgement sits
Five times in that, ere once in our five wits.[1]

ROMEO.

And we mean well, in going to this mask;[2]
But 'tis no wit to go.[3]

MERCUTIO.

Why, may one ask?

ROMEO.

I dreamt a dream to-night.[4]

MERCUTIO.

And so did I.

ROMEO.

Well, what was yours?

MERCUTIO.

That dreamers often lie.

ROMEO.

In bed asleep, while they do dream things true.

MERCUTIO.

O, then, I see Queen Mab[5] hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife; and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies[6]
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep:
Her wagon-spokes made of long spinners'[7] legs;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
The traces, of the smallest spider's web;
The collars, of the moonshine's watery beams;
Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film;
Her wagoner, a small gray-coated gnat,

---

[1] **five wits:** five senses. [2] **mask:** masquerade ball. [3] **no wit to go:** not wise to go. [4] **tonight:** last night. [5] **Queen Mab:** the fairies' midwife, who not only delivered sleeping men of their dreams but also stole new-born babies and left changelings in their place. [6] **atomies:** very small things; obsolete word for *atoms*. [7] **spinners:** spiders.

Not half so big as a round little worm
Prickt from the lazy finger of a maid;[1]
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight;[2]
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees;
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,—
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweetmeats[3] tainted are:
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;
And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's[4] tail
Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep,
Then dreams he of another benefice:[5]
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes,[6] Spanish blades,
Of healths five-fadom deep;[7] and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts, and wakes;
And, being thus frighted, swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
That plats the manes of horses in the night;
And bakes the elf-locks[8] in foul sluttish hairs,
Which once untangled, much misfortune bodes:
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them, and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage:
This is she—

---

[1] **lazy finger of a maid:** in Elizabethan days, it was a common belief that worms bred in idle fingers. [2] **straight:** immediately. [3] **sweetmeats:** kissing comfits, to perfume the breath. [4] **tithe-pig:** a parishioner's contribution. [5] **benefice:** a lucrative position. [6] **ambuscadoes:** troops lying in ambush. [7] **healths five-fadom deep:** much drinking of toasts to one another's health. [8] **elf-locks:** matted hair, the work of fairies.

ROMEO.

Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace!
Thou talk'st of nothing.

MERCUTIO.

True, I talk of dreams;
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy;[1]
Which is as thin of substance as the air;
And more inconstant than the wind, who wooes
Even now the frozen bosom of the north,
And, being anger'd, puffs away from thence,
Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.[2]

BENVOLIO.

This wind, you talk of, blows us from ourselves;
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

ROMEO.

I fear, too early: for my mind misgives
Some consequence,[3] yet hanging in the stars,
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night's revels; and expire[4] the term
Of a despised life, closed in my breast,
By some vile forfeit[5] of untimely death:
But He, that hath the steerage of my course,
Direct my sail!—On, lusty gentlemen!

BENVOLIO.

Strike, drum. [*They march about the stage, and exeunt.*

Scene v.

A hall in CAPULET'S *house.*

MUSICIANS *waiting.* SERVING-MEN *come forth with their napkins.*

---

[1] **vain fantasy:** foolish fancies.
[2] **dew-dropping south:** moist, rainy south.
[3] **consequence:** coming event.
[4] **expire:** cancel.
[5] **forfeit:** penalty.

FIRST SERVING-MAN.

Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take away? he shift a trencher! [1] he scrape a trencher!

SECOND SERVING-MAN.

When good manners shall lie all in one or two men's hands, and they unwasht too, 'tis a foul thing.

FIRST SERVING-MAN.

Away with the joint-stools,[2] remove the court-cupboard,[3] look to the plate:—good thou, save me a piece of marchpane;[4] and, as thou lovest me, let the porter let in Susan Grindstone and Nell.—Antony and Potpan!

SECOND SERVING-MAN.

Ay, boy, ready.

FIRST SERVING-MAN.

You are lookt for and call'd for, askt for and sought for, in the great chamber.

THIRD SERVING-MAN.

We cannot be here and there too.—Cheerly, boys; be brisk[5] awhile, and the longer liver take all.

[*They retire behind.*

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, JULIET, TYBALT, *and others of the house, with the* GUESTS *and* MASKERS.

CAPULET.

Welcome, gentlemen! ladies that have their toes
Unplagued with corns will have a bout with you:—
Ah ha, my mistresses! which of you all
Will now deny to dance? she that makes dainty,[6]

---

[1] **trencher:** a wooden platter. [2] **joint-stools:** stools made by a cabinetmaker, on which they sat to eat. [3] **court-cupboard:** a sort of movable sideboard. [4] **marchpane:** a confection made of pounded almonds, sugar, and rosewater (similar to our marzipan). [5] **be brisk:** dance. [6] **makes dainty:** makes a polite excuse not to dance.

She, I'll swear, hath corns; am I come near ye[1] now?—
Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day
That I have worn a visor; and could tell
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,
Such as would please; 'tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone:
You are welcome, gentlemen! Come, musicians, play.
A hall,[2] a hall! give room! and foot it, girls.—
[*Music plays, and they dance.*
More light, you knaves; and turn the tables up,[3]
And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot.—
Ah, sirrah, this unlookt-for sport comes well.
Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet;
For you and I are past our dancing days:
How long is't now since last yourself and I
Were in a mask?

SECOND CAPULET.

By 'r lady,[4] thirty years.

CAPULET.

What, man! 'tis not so much, 'tis not so much:
'Tis since the nuptial of Lucentio,
Come Pentecost as quickly as it will,
Some five-and-twenty years; and then we maskt.

SECOND CAPULET.

'Tis more, 'tis more: his son is elder,[5] sir;
His son is thirty.

CAPULET.

Will you tell me that?
His son was but a ward[6] two years ago.

---

[1] **am I come near ye**: have I hit home. [2] **hall**: dancing space. [3] **turn the tables up**: remove the boards from the trestles on which they rest. [4] **By 'r lady**: By our lady (a mild oath). [5] **elder**: older (than twenty-five years of age). [6] **ward**: minor; less than legal age.

ROMEO [*to a* SERVANT].

What lady's that, which doth enrich the hand
Of yonder knight?

SERVANT.

I know not, sir.

ROMEO.

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear;
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
As yonder lady o'er her fellows[1] shows.
The measure[2] done, I'll watch her place of stand,[3]
And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.
Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

TYBALT.

This, by his voice, should be a Montague:—
Fetch me my rapier, boy:—what, dares the slave
Come hither, cover'd with an antic face,[4]
To fleer[5] and scorn at our solemnity?
Now, by the stock and honour of my kin,
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

CAPULET.

Why, how now, kinsman! wherefore storm you so?

TYBALT.

Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe;
A villain, that is hither come in spite,
To scorn at our solemnity[6] this night.

CAPULET.

Young Romeo is it?

TYBALT.

'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

---

[1] **her fellows:** the other ladies attending the dance.
[2] **measure:** dance.
[3] **her place of stand:** where she is standing.
[4] **antic face:** grinning face (mask).
[5] **fleer:** sneer.
[6] **solemnity:** celebration.

CAPULET.

Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone,
He bears him like a portly[1] gentleman;
And, to say truth, Verona brags of him
To be a virtuous and well-govern'd youth:
I would not for the wealth of all this town
Here in my house do him disparagement:
Therefore be patient, take no note of him,—
It is my will; the which if thou respect,
Show a fair presence,[2] and put off these frowns,
An ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.

TYBALT.

It fits, when such a villain is a guest:
I'll not endure him.

CAPULET.

He shall be endured:
What, goodman boy! [3]—I say, he shall;—go to;
Am I the master here, or you? go to.[4]
You'll not endure him!—God shall mend my soul,
You'll make a mutiny among my guests!
You will set cock-a-hoop! [5] you'll be the man!

TYBALT.

Why, uncle, 'tis a shame—

CAPULET.

Go to, go to;
You are a saucy[6] boy:—is't so, indeed?—
This trick may chance to scathe you,[7]—I know what:
You must contrary me! [8] marry, 'tis time.—
Well said, my hearts!—You are a princox;[9] go:
Be quiet, or—More light, more light!—For shame!

---

[1] **portly:** well bred. [2] **fair presence:** cheerful countenance. [3] **goodman boy:** a familiar term of address to an inferior. [4] **go to:** behave yourself. [5] **set cock-a-hoop:** raise a row; stir up things. [6] **saucy:** seasoned with sauce. [7] **to scathe you:** to harm you. [8] **contrary me:** cross me. [9] **princox:** impudent; forward; cocky.

I'll make you quiet: what!—Cheerly, my hearts!

TYBALT.

Patience perforce[1] with wilful choler[2] meeting
Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.
I will withdraw: but this intrusion shall,
Now seeming sweet, convert to bitter gall. [*Exit.*

ROMEO [*to* JULIET].

If I profane with my unworthiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle fine[3] is this,—
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

JULIET.

Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
Which mannerly devotion shows in this;
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmers'[4] kiss.

ROMEO.

Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

JULIET.

Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

ROMEO.

O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do;
They pray; grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

JULIET.

Saints do not move,[5] though grant for prayers' sake.

ROMEO.

Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.
Thus from my lips, by yours, my sin is purged.

[*Kissing her.*

JULIET.

Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

---

[1] **Patience perforce:** compulsory submission. [2] **choler:** bad feeling. [3] **fine:** penance. [4] **palmer:** a pilgrim who wore two crossed leaves of palms as a token that he had visited the Holy Land. [5] **Saints do not move:** saints do not involve themselves in worldly affairs.

ROMEO.

Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urged!
Give me my sin again. *[Kissing her again.*

JULIET.

You kiss by th' book.[1]

NURSE.

Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

ROMEO.

What is her mother?

NURSE.

Marry, bachelor,
Her mother is the lady of the house,
And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous:
I nursed her daughter, that you talkt withal;
I tell you, he that can lay hold of her
Shall have the chinks.[2]

ROMEO.

Is she a Capulet?
O dear[3] account! my life is my foe's debt.

BENVOLIO.

Away, be gone; the sport is at the best.[4]

ROMEO.

Ay, so I fear; the more is my unrest.

CAPULET

Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone;
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.[5]—
Is it e'en so? why, then, I thank you all;
I thank you, honest gentlemen; good night.—
More torches here!—Come on, then, let's to bed.
[*to* SECOND CAPULET] Ah, sirrah, by my fay,[6] it waxes late:
I'll to my rest. [*Exeunt all but* JULIET *and* NURSE.

---

[1] You kiss by th' book: you kiss as if you had studied the art of kissing. [2] Shall have the chinks: will have great wealth. [3] dear: costly. [4] is at the best: the best of it is over. [5] towards: at hand; coming up (*banquet* here means dessert). [6] by my fay: by my faith.

JULIET.

Come hither, nurse. What is yond gentleman?

NURSE.

The son and heir of old Tiberio.

JULIET.

What's he that now is going out of door?

NURSE.

Marry, that, I think, be young Petruchio.

JULIET.

What's he that follows there, that would not dance?

NURSE.

I know not.

JULIET.

Go, ask his name:—if he be married,
My grave is like to be my wedding-bed.

NURSE.

His name is Romeo, and a Montague;
The only son of your great enemy.

JULIET.

My only love sprung from my only hate!
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
Prodigious[1] birth of love it is to me,
That I must love a loathed enemy.

NURSE.

What's this? what's this?

JULIET.

A rime[2] I learn'd even now
Of one I danced withal.

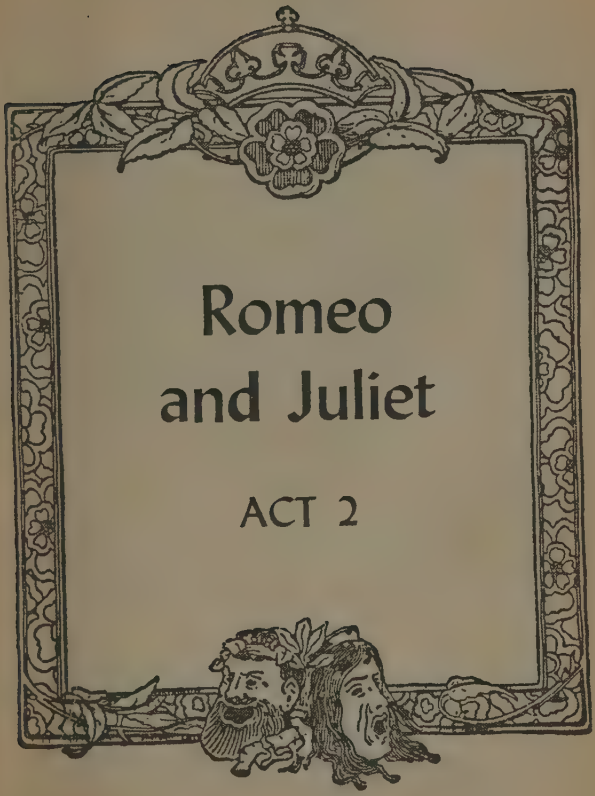
[*One calls within,* Juliet.

NURSE.

Anon, anon!—
Come, let's away; the strangers all are gone. [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] **Prodigious:** monstrous.
[2] **rime:** rhyme.



Romeo and Juliet

ACT 2

ACT II

ROMEO evades Benvolio and Mercutio, with whom he left the ball, and lingers below the balcony of Juliet's room pledging his love to her. Juliet appears on the balcony and confesses her love for him, finally sending him away as dawn begins to break. She charges him with making arrangements for their marriage, if his love is sincere, and she promises to send a messenger to him on the next day, to bring her instructions as to the time and place of their rendezvous. Romeo persuades Friar Lawrence, a hermit, to marry them. In the greatest good spirits, to the relief of his friends, who see a return to his former gay self, he sends a message with Juliet's old nurse who comes as her emissary. The lovers meet at the hermit's cell, and Act II ends as Friar Lawrence leads them off to marry them.

ACT II. PROLOGUE.

Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS.

Now old desire doth in his death-bed lie,
And young affection gapes[1] to be his heir;
That fair,[2] for which love groan'd for, and would die,
With tender Juliet matcht,[3] is now not fair.
Now Romeo is beloved, and loves again,
Alike bewitched[4] by the charm of looks;
But to his foe supposed he must complain,
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks:
Being held a foe, he may not have access
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear;
And she as much in love, her means much less
To meet her new-beloved any where:
But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,
Tempering extremities with extreme sweet. [*Exit.*

SCENE I.

Verona. CAPULET'S ORCHARD.

Enter ROMEO, *alone.*

ROMEO.

Can I go forward when my heart is here?
Turn back, dull earth,[5] and find thy centre[6] out.
[*He leaps the orchard-wall.*

Enter BENVOLIO *with* MERCUTIO.

---

[1] **gapes:** aspires.
[2] **fair:** fair one.
[3] **matcht:** compared.
[4] **alike bewitched:** both bewitched.
[5] **dull earth:** his earthly body.
[6] **centre:** heart; therefore, Juliet.

BENVOLIO.

Romeo! my cousin Romeo!

MERCUTIO.

He is wise;
And, on my life, hath stoln him home to bed.

BENVOLIO.

He ran this way, and leapt this orchard [1]-wall:
Call, good Mercutio.

MERCUTIO.

Nay, I'll conjure too.—
Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh:
Speak but one rime, and I am satisfied;
Cry but 'Ay me!' pronounce but 'love' and 'dove;'
Speak to my gossip[2] Venus one fair word,
One nickname for her purblind [3] son and heir,
Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim,[4]
When King Cophetua[5] loved the beggar-maid!—
He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not;
The ape is dead, and I must conjure him.—
I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,
By her fine foot, straight leg, and quivering thigh,
And the demesnes[6] that there adjacent lie,
That in thy likeness thou appear to us!

BENVOLIO.

An if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

MERCUTIO.

This cannot anger him: 'twould anger him
To raise a spirit in his mistress' circle
Of some strange nature, letting it there stand
Till she had laid it and conjured it down;
That were some spite:[7] my invocation

---

[1] orchard: synonymous with garden. [2] gossip: sponsor. [3] purblind: completely blind. [4] trim: accurately; Adam Cupid: Adam Bell was a famous archer. [5] King Cophetua: an imaginary African king who, hit by Cupid's arrow, fell in love with a beggar-maid. [6] demesnes: regions. [7] spite: harm.

Is fair[1] and honest, and, in his mistress' name,
I conjure only but to raise up him.

BENVOLIO.

Come, he hath hid himself among these trees,
To be consorted with[2] the humorous[3] night:
Blind is his love, and best befits the dark.

MERCUTIO.

If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.
Now will he sit under a medlar-tree,[4]
And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit
As maids call medlars, when they laugh alone.—
O, Romeo, that she were, O, that she were
An open *et-cætera*, thou a poperin pear![5]
Romeo, good night:—I'll to my truckle-bed;[6]
This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep:
Come, shall we go?

BENVOLIO.

Go, then; for 'tis in vain
To seek him here that means not to be found. [*Exeunt.*

ROMEO [*coming forward*].

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.—
[JULIET *appears above at a window.*
But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!—
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid[7] art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery[8] is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.—
It is my lady; O, it is my love!

---

[1] **fair:** proper. [2] **be consorted with:** harmonize with; blend with. [3] **humorous:** humid; dewy; foggy. [4] **medlar-tree:** a tree that bears a small brownish fruit good to eat only when nearly rotten. [5] **poperin pear:** a pear brought into England from Poperingue in French Flanders. [6] **truckle-bed:** trundle bed; a low bed on rollers. [7] **her maid:** a votary of Diana's. [8] **vestal livery:** virginal dress.

O, that she knew she were!—
She speaks, yet she says nothing: what of that?
Her eye discourses; I will answer it.—
I am too bold; 'tis not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright,
That birds would sing, and think it were not night.
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

JULIET.

Ay me!

ROMEO.

She speaks:—
O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a winged messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturned wondering eyes
Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

JULIET.

O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore[1] art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father, and refuse thy name;
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

---

[1] wherefore: why.

ROMEO [*aside*].
Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?
JULIET.
'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;—
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What's in a name! that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet;
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes[1]
Without that title:—Romeo, doff [2] thy name;
And for that name, which is no part of thee,
Take all myself.
ROMEO.
I take thee at thy word:
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.
JULIET.
What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in night,
So stumblest on my counsel? [3]
ROMEO.
By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am:
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,
Because it is an enemy to thee;
Had I it written, I would tear the word.
JULIET.
My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words
Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound:
Art thou not Romeo and a Montague?

---

[1] **owes**: owns.
[2] **doff**: give up; take off.
[3] **counsel**: musings.

ROMEO.

Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

JULIET.

How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?
The orchard-walls are high and hard to climb;
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

ROMEO.

With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls;
For stony limits cannot hold love out:
And what love can do, that dares love attempt;
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let[1] to me.

JULIET.

If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

ROMEO.

Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet,
And I am proof [2] against their enmity.

JULIET.

I would not for the world they saw thee here.

ROMEO.

I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight;
And but thou love me,[3] let them find me here:
My life were better ended by their hate
Than death prorogued,[4] wanting of [5] thy love.

JULIET.

By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

ROMEO

By love, who first did prompt me to inquire;
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore washt with the furthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.

---

[1] let: hindrance.
[2] proof: guarded; armored.
[3] And but thou love me: unless you love me.
[4] prorogued: delayed; postponed.
[5] wanting of: lacking.

JULIET.

Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush depaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.
Fain would I dwell on form,[1] fain, fain deny
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment![2]
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay';
And I will take thy word: yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false; at lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond;
And therefore thou mayst think my 'haviour light:[3]
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.[4]
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,
My true love's passion: therefore pardon me;
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered.[5]

ROMEO.

Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear,
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops,—

JULIET.

O, swear not by the moon, th'inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

ROMEO.

What shall I swear by?

---

[1] **Fain would I dwell on form:** gladly would I observe the amenities.
[2] **farewell compliment:** good-bye to polite address.
[3] **think my 'haviour light:** think my behavior unmaidenly.
[4] **strange:** reserved.
[5] **discovered:** revealed.

JULIET.

Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

ROMEO.

If my heart's dear love—

JULIET.

Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract[1] to-night:
It is too rash, too unadvised,[2] too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say 'It lightens.' Sweet, good night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

ROMEO.

O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

JULIET.

What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

ROMEO.

Th'exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

JULIET.

I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:
And yet I would it were to give again.

ROMEO.

Wouldst thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?

JULIET.

But to be frank,[3] and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have:
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,

---

[1] **contract:** meeting.
[2] **unadvised:** thoughtless.
[3] **frank:** generous.

The more I have, for both are infinite.
I hear some noise within; dear love, adieu!—

[NURSE *calls within.*

Anon, good nurse!—Sweet Montague, be true.
Stay but a little, I will come again. [*Exit above.*

ROMEO.

O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard,
Being in night, all this is but a dream,
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

Enter JULIET *above.*

JULIET.

Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.
If that thy bent of love be honourable,[1]
Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,
By one that I'll procure[2] to come to thee,
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite;[3]
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

NURSE [*within*].

Madam!

JULIET.

I come, anon:—But if thou mean'st not well,
I do beseech thee—

NURSE [*within*].

Madam!

JULIET.

By and by,[4] I come:—
To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief:
To-morrow will I send.

ROMEO.

So thrive my soul—

JULIET.

A thousand times good night! [*Exit above.*

---

[1] **If that thy bent of love be honourable:** that is, if your intention is marriage.
[2] **procure:** provide.
[3] **rite:** wedding ceremony.
[4] **By and by:** immediately; at once.

ROMEO.

A thousand times the worse, to want thy light.—
Love goes toward love, as schoolboys from their books;
But love from love, toward school with heavy[1] looks.

[*Retiring.*

Enter JULIET *again.*

JULIET.

Hist! Romeo, hist!—O, for a falconer's voice,
To lure this tassel-gentle[2] back again!
Bondage is hoarse,[3] and may not speak aloud;
Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine,
With repetition of my Romeo's name.
Romeo!

ROMEO.

It is my soul that calls upon my name:
How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
Like softest music to attending ears!

JULIET.

Romeo!

ROMEO.

My dear?

JULIET.

At what o'clock to-morrow
Shall I send to thee?

ROMEO.

At the hour of nine.

JULIET.

I will not fail: 'tis twenty years till then.
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

ROMEO.

Let me stand here till thou remember it.

---

[1] heavy: sad.

[2] tassel-gentle: correctly, tiercel; the male of the gosshawk, it gets its name from the fact that it is a third less in size than the female; gentle, because it is easily tamed.

[3] Bondage is hoarse: that is, I must be careful not to be overheard because I am not free to speak.

JULIET.

I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Remembering how I love thy company.

ROMEO.

And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,
Forgetting any other home but this.

JULIET.

'Tis almost morning; I would have thee gone,—
And yet no further than a wanton's bird,
Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,[1]
And with a silk thread plucks it back again,
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

ROMEO.

I would I were thy bird.

JULIET.

Sweet, so would I:
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
Good night, good night! parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say good night till it be morrow.

[*Exit above.*

ROMEO.

Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!—
Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!
Hence will I to my ghostly father's[2] cell,
His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell.[3] [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

FRIAR LAURENCE'S *cell.*

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE, *alone, with a basket.*

---

[1] **gyves:** fetters.
[2] **ghostly father:** spiritual father (friar).
[3] **my dear hap to tell:** to tell him of my good fortune.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

The gray-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,
Chequering the eastern clouds with streaks of light;
And flecked darkness like a drunkard reels
From forth day's path and Titan's[1] fiery wheels:
Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye,
The day to cheer, and night's dank dew to dry,
I must up-fill this osier-cage[2] of ours
With baleful weeds and precious-juiced flowers.
The earth, that's nature's mother, is her tomb;
What is her burying grave, that is her womb:
And from her womb children of divers kind
We sucking on her natural bosom find;
Many for many virtues excellent,
None but for some, and yet all different.
O, mickle[3] is the powerful grace[4] that lies
In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities:
For naught so vile that on the earth doth live,
But to the earth some special good doth give;
Nor aught so good, but, strain'd [5] from that fair use,
Revolts from true birth,[6] stumbling on abuse:
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied;
And vice sometime's by action dignified.
Within the infant rind of this small flower
Poison hath residence, and medicine power:
For this, being smelt, with that part[7] cheers each part;
Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.[8]
Two such opposed kings encamp them still
In man as well as herbs,—grace and rude will;

---

[1] **Titan:** Hyperion, the sun god, one of the Titans, a gigantic race that inhabited the earth before man was made. [2] **osier-cage:** willow basket. [3] **mickle:** great. [4] **powerful grace:** "efficacious virtue"—Johnson. [5] **strain'd:** diverted. [6] **Revolts from true birth:** denies its true heritage. [7] **that part:** its fragrance. [8] **Slays . . . heart:** the heart stops, and with it all the senses cease to function.

And where the worser is predominant,
Full soon the canker death[1] eats up that plant.

Enter ROMEO.

ROMEO.

Good morrow, father.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Benedicite! [2]
What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?—
Young son, it argues a distemper'd [3] head
So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed:
Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,
And where care lodges sleep will never lie;
But where unbruised [4] youth with unstuft[5] brain
Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign:
Therefore thy earliness doth me assure
Thou art up-roused by some distemperature;[6]
Or if not so, then here I hit it right,—
Our Romeo hath not been in bed to-night.

ROMEO.

That last is true; the sweeter rest was mine.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

God pardon sin! wast thou with Rosaline?

ROMEO.

With Rosaline, my ghostly father? no;
I have forgot that name, and that name's woe.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

That's my good son: but where hast thou been, then?

ROMEO.

I'll tell thee, ere thou ask it me agen.[7]
I have been feasting with mine enemy;
Where, on a sudden, one hath wounded me,
That's by me wounded: both our remedies

---

[1] **canker death**: cankerworm. [2] ***Benedicite!***: Bless you! (interjection). [3] **distemper'd**: disturbed. [4] **unbruised**: uninjured; unmarred. [5] **unstuft**: not overloaded. [6] **distemperature**: disease. [7] **agen**: again.

Within thy help and holy physic[1] lies:
I bear no hatred, blessed man; for, lo,
My intercession likewise steads my foe.[2]

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drift;[3]
Riddling[4] confession finds but riddling shrift.

ROMEO.

Then plainly know my heart's dear love is set
On the fair daughter of rich Capulet:
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine;
And all combined, save what thou must combine
By holy marriage: when, and where, and how,
We met, we woo'd, and made exchange of vow,
I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
That thou consent to marry us to-day.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here!
Is Rosaline, whom thou didst love so dear,
So soon forsaken? young men's love, then, lies
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.
Jesu Maria, what a deal of brine[5]
Hath washt thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline!
How much salt water thrown away in waste,
To season love, that of it doth not taste!
The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,
Thy old groans ring yet in mine ancient ears;
Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit
Of an old tear that is not washt off yet:
If e'er thou wast thyself, and these woes thine,
Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline:
And art thou changed? pronounce this sentence, then,—
Women may fall, when there's no strength in men.

---

[1] **physic**: medicine. [2] **likewise steads my foe**: it also aids Juliet (his foe because she has wounded his heart). [3] **homely in thy drift**: simple in your meaning. [4] **Riddling**: puzzling. [5] **shrift**: absolution. [6] **brine**: salty tears.

ROMEO.

Thou chidd'st[1] me oft for loving Rosaline.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

For doting,[2] not for loving, pupil mine.

ROMEO.

And bad'st me bury love.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Not in a grave,
To lay one in, another out to have.

ROMEO.

I pray thee, chide not: she whom I love now
Doth grace for grace and love for love allow;
The other did not so.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

O, she knew well
Thy love did read by rote,[3] and could not spell.
But come, young waverer, come, go with me,
In one respect I'll thy assistant be;
For this alliance may so happy prove,
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.

ROMEO.

O, let us hence; I stand on sudden haste.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Wisely, and slow; they stumble that run fast. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

A street.

Enter BENVOLIO *and* MERCUTIO.

MERCUTIO.

Why, where the devil should this Romeo be?—
Came he not home to-night?

---

[1] **chidd'st:** reproved.
[2] **doting:** being foolishly enamored.
[3] **did read by rote:** was memorized by heart (not *from* the heart).

BENVOLIO.

Not to his father's; I spoke with his man.

MERCUTIO.

Ah, that same pale hard-hearted wench, that Rosaline,
Torments him so, that he will sure run mad.

BENVOLIO.

Tybalt, the kinsman to old Capulet,
Hath sent a letter to his father's house.

MERCUTIO.

A challenge, on my life.

BENVOLIO.

Romeo will answer it.

MERCUTIO.

Any man that can write may answer a letter.

BENVOLIO.

Nay, he will answer the letter's master, how he dares, being dared.

MERCUTIO.

Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead! stabb'd with a white wench's black eye; shot through the ear with a love-song; the very pin of his heart cleft with the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft;[1] and is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

BENVOLIO.

Why, what is Tybalt?

MERCUTIO.

More than prince of cats,[2] I can tell you. O, he is the courageous captain of complements. He fights as you sing prick-song,[3] keeps time, distance, and proportion; rests me his minim rest,[4] one, two, and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button,[5] a duellist, a duellist; a gentleman of

---

[1] **blind bow-boy's butt-shaft:** Cupid's blunt arrow (an unbarbed arrow was used for shooting at butts). [2] **prince of cats:** Tibert (another spelling for Tybalt) is the cat's name in *Reynard the Fox*. [3] **prick-song:** songs in which the notes are set down (pricked out); hence, music sung from notes. [4] **minim rest:** short pause in music. [5] **the very butcher of a silk button:** an expert duelist.

the very first house,[1]—of the first and second cause: ah, the immortal passado! the punto reverso! the hay!—

BENVOLIO.

The what?

MERCUTIO.

The pox of[2] such antic, lisping, affecting fantasticoes; these new tuners of accents!—'By Jesu, a very good blade!—a very tall man!—a very good whore!'—Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandsire,[3] that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies,[4] these fashion-mongers, these *pardonnez-mois*, who stand so much on the new form that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench?[5] O, their *bons*, their *bons!*

BENVOLIO.

Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

MERCUTIO.

Without his roe, like a dried herring:—O flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified!—Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flow'd in;[6] Laura, to his lady, was but a kitchen-wench,—marry, she had a better love to be-rime her; Dido, a dowdy; Cleopatra, a gipsy; Helen and Hero,[7] hildings[8] and harlots; Thisbe, a gray eye or so, but not to the purpose:—

Enter ROMEO.

Signior Romeo, *bon jour!* there's a French salutation to your French slop.[9] You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

ROMEO.

Good morrow to you both. What counterfeit did I give you?

---

[1] **the very first house:** of the first eminence. [2] **the pox of:** a plague on. [3] **grandsire:** Mercutio twits Benvolio for his sedate manners. [4] **flies:** parasites. [5] **form . . . bench:** quibbles on the two meanings of form—fashion and bench. [6] **numbers . . . in:** love sonnets of the Italian poet. [7] **Dido:** Queen of Carthage; **Helen:** Helen of Troy; **Hero:** Leander's love. [8] **hildings:** menials; drudges. [9] **French slop:** large, loose French trousers.

MERCUTIO.

The slip,[1] sir, the slip; can you not conceive?

ROMEO.

Pardon, good Mercutio, my business was great; and in such a case as mine a man may strain courtesy.

MERCUTIO.

That's as much as to say, Such a case as yours constrains a man to bow in the hams.

ROMEO.

Meaning, to court'sy.

MERCUTIO.

Thou hast most kindly hit it.

ROMEO.

A most courteous exposition.

MERCUTIO.

Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

ROMEO.

Pink for flower.

MERCUTIO.

Right.

ROMEO.

Why, then is my pump well-flower'd.[2]

MERCUTIO.

Well said: follow me this jest now, till thou hast worn out thy pump; that, when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain, after the wearing, solely singular.

ROMEO.

O single-soled jest,[3] solely singular for the singleness!

MERCUTIO.

Come between us, good Benvolio, for my wits fail.

---

[1] **slip**: counterfeit money.

[2] **pump well-flower'd**: in Shakespeare's day, shoes were often pinked, or punched, with holes.

[3] **single-soled jest**: feeble attempt at a joke.

ROMEO.

Switch and spurs, switch and spurs; or I'll cry a match.[1]

MERCUTIO.

Nay, if thy wits run the wild-goose chase, I have done, for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one of thy wits than, I am sure, I have in my whole five: was I with you there[2] for the goose?[3]

ROMEO.

Thou wast never with me for any thing when thou wast not there for the goose.

MERCUTIO.

I will bite thee by the ear for that jest.

ROMEO.

Nay, good goose, bite not.

MERCUTIO.

Thy wit is a very bitter sweeting;[4] it is a most sharp sauce.

ROMEO.

And is it not well served in to a sweet goose?

MERCUTIO.

O, here's a wit of cheveril,[5] that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell[6] broad!

ROMEO.

I stretch it out for that word 'broad'; which, added to the goose, proves thee far and wide a broad goose.

MERCUTIO.

Why, is not this better now than groaning for love? now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature: for this drivelling love is like a great natural,[7] that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole.

---

[1] **cry a match**: claim the victory. [2] **was I with you there**: did I hit the mark? [3] **goose**: a play on *goose* in wild-goose chase, a horse race in which two horses were started together and the rider who fell behind had to follow the leader however rough the going. [4] **sweeting**: apple. [5] **cheveril**: soft, pliable leather. [6] **ell**: a measure (45 inches, in England). [7] **natural**: idiot.

BENVOLIO.

Stop there, stop there.

MERCUTIO.

Thou desirest me to stop in my tale against the hair.[1]

BENVOLIO.

Thou wouldst else have made thy tale large.

MERCUTIO.

O, thou art deceived; I would have made it short: for I was come to the whole depth of my tale; and meant, indeed, to occupy the argument no longer.

ROMEO.

Here's goodly gear![2]

Enter NURSE *and her man* PETER.

MERCUTIO.

A sail, a sail, a sail!

BENVOLIO.

Two, two; a shirt and a smock.[3]

NURSE.

Peter!

PETER.

Anon?

NURSE.

My fan, Peter.

MERCUTIO.

Good Peter, to hide her face; for her fan's the fairer face.

NURSE.

God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

MERCUTIO.

God ye good den,[4] fair gentlewoman.

---

[1] **against the hair:** against the grain.
[2] **goodly gear:** fair merchandise (ironic).
[3] **smock:** woman's apparel corresponding to a man's shirt.
[4] **God ye good den:** literally, God give you a good evening.

NURSE.

Is it good den?

MERCUTIO.

'Tis no less, I tell you; for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.

NURSE.

Out upon you! what a man are you!

ROMEO.

One, gentlewoman, that God hath made, for himself to mar.

NURSE.

By my troth,[1] it is well said;—'for himself to mar,' quoth a'?—Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo?

ROMEO.

I can tell you; but young Romeo will be older when you have found him than he was when you sought him: I am the youngest of that name, for fault of a worse.

NURSE.

You say well.

MERCUTIO.

Yea, is the worst well? very well took, i'faith; wisely, wisely.

NURSE.

If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence[2] with you.

BENVOLIO.

She will indite[3] him to some supper.

MERCUTIO.

A bawd,[4] a bawd, a bawd! So-ho!

ROMEO.

What hast thou found?

---

[1] **By my troth:** in truth.

[2] **confidence:** she probably means "conference."

[3] **indite:** Benvolio uses the wrong word to mock her; he means "invite."

[4] **bawd:** procuress; go-between.

MERCUTIO.

No hare,[1] sir; unless a hare, sir, in a Lenten pie, that is something stale and hoar[2] ere it be spent.

[*He walks by them and sings.*

An old hare hoar,
And an old hare hoar,
Is very good meat in Lent:
But a hare that is hoar
Is too much for a score,
When it hoars ere it be spent.—

Romeo, will you come to your father's? we'll to dinner thither.

ROMEO.

I will follow you.

MERCUTIO.

Farewell, ancient lady; farewell,—[*singing*] lady, lady, lady.[3]

[*exeunt* MERCUTIO *and* BENVOLIO.

NURSE.

Marry, farewell!—I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his ropery?[4]

ROMEO.

A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk, and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.

NURSE.

An a'[5] speak any thing against me, I'll take him down, an a' were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks;[6] and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills;[7] I am none of his skains-mates.[8]—And thou [*she turns to* PETER *her man*] must stand by too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?

---

[1] **hare**: courtesan. [2] **hoar**: moldy. [3] **lady, lady, lady**: from the "Ballad of Susanna." [4] **ropery**: roguery; deserving of a rope. [5] **a'**: he. [6] **Jacks**: knaves. [7] **flirt-gills**: women of light behavior; flirtatious wenches. [8] **skains-mates**: cutthroat companions (the meaning of this term has been much disputed).

PETER.

I saw no man use you at his pleasure; if I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you: I dare draw as soon as another man, if I see occasion in a good quarrel, and the law on my side.

NURSE.

Now, afore God, I am so vext, that every part about me quivers. Scurvy knave!—Pray you, sir, a word: and, as I told you, my young lady bade me inquire you out; what she bade me say, I will keep to myself: but first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool's-paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behaviour, as they say: for the gentlewoman is young; and therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly it were an ill thing to be offer'd to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.[1]

ROMEO.

Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest unto thee—

NURSE.

Good heart, and, i'faith, I will tell her as much:
Lord, Lord, she will be a joyful woman.

ROMEO.

What wilt thou tell her, nurse? thou dost not mark me.[2]

NURSE.

I will tell her, sir,—that you do protest; which, as I take it, is a gentlemanlike offer.

ROMEO.

Bid her devise some means to come to shrift[3]
This afternoon;

---

[1] **weak dealing:** despicable treatment.
[2] **mark me:** pay attention to my words.
[3] **shrift:** confession.

And there she shall at Friar Laurence' cell
Be shrived and married. Here is for thy pains.

NURSE.

No, truly, sir; not a penny.

ROMEO.

Go to,[1] I say you shall.

NURSE.

This afternoon, sir? well, she shall be there.

ROMEO.

And stay, good nurse, behind the abbey-wall:
Within this hour my man shall be with thee,
And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair;[2]
Which to the high top-gallant[3] of my joy
Must be my convoy in the secret night.
Farewell; be trusty, and I'll quite[4] thy pains:
Farewell; commend me to thy mistress.

NURSE.

Now God in heaven bless thee!—Hark you, sir.

ROMEO.

What say'st thou, my dear nurse?

NURSE.

Is your man secret? [5] Did you ne'er hear say,
Two may keep counsel, putting one away? [6]

ROMEO.

I warrant thee, my man's as true as steel.

NURSE.

Well, sir; my mistress is the sweetest lady—Lord, Lord! when 'twas a little prating thing,—O, there is a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain lay knife aboard;[7] but she, good soul, had as lief see a toad, a very toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes, and tell her that Paris is the properer[8] man; but, I'll warrant you, when I say so, she looks

---

[1] **Go to:** not another word from you. [2] **tackled stair:** rope ladder. [3] **high top-gallant:** above the topmost mast. [4] **quite:** requite. [5] **secret:** trustworthy. [6] **Two may keep counsel, putting one away:** i.e., one is the only safe number to keep a secret. [7] **fain lay knife aboard:** gladly board ship (like a pirate) and win the prize (Juliet's hand). [8] **properer:** more handsome.

as pale as any clout in the versal world.[1] Doth not rosemary and Romeo begin both with a letter?

ROMEO.

Ay, nurse; what of that? both with an R.

NURSE.

Ah, mocker! that's the dog's name;[2] R is for the—No; I know it begins with some other letter:—and she hath the prettiest sententious[3] of it, of you and rosemary,[4] that it would do you good to hear it.

ROMEO.

Commend me to thy lady.

NURSE.

Ay, a thousand times. [*Exit* ROMEO.]—Peter!

PETER.

Anon?

NURSE.

Peter, take my fan, and go before. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

CAPULET'S *orchard.*

Enter JULIET.

JULIET.

The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse;
In half an hour she promised to return.
Perchance she cannot meet him:—that's not so.—
O, she is lame! love's heralds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,
Driving back shadows over louring[5] hills:
Therefore do nimble-pinion'd [6] doves draw love,

---

[1] as pale as any clout in the versal world: as white as any cloth in the universe; in other words, as white as a sheet. [2] dog's name: the Romans called R the dog's letter, probably because the sound of it is like a growl. [3] sententious: saying; another of the nurse's garbled words. [4] rosemary: an emblem of remembrance. [5] louring: lowering; dark. [6] nimble-pinion'd: swift-winged.

And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.
Now is the sun upon the highmost hill
Of this day's journey; and from nine till twelve
Is three long hours,—yet she is not come.
Had she affections[1] and warm youthful blood,
She'ld be as swift in motion as a ball;
My words would bandy[2] her to my sweet love,
And his to me:
But old folks, many feign[3] as they were dead;
Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.—
O God, she comes!

Enter NURSE *and her man* PETER.

O honey nurse, what news?
Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

NURSE.

Peter, stay at the gate. [*Exit* PETER.

JULIET.

Now, good sweet nurse,—O Lord, why look'st thou sad?
Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;
If good, thou shamest the music of sweet news
By playing it to me with so sour a face.

NURSE.

I am a-weary, give me leave awhile:—
Fie, how my bones ache! what a jaunt have I had!

JULIET.

I would thou hadst my bones, and I thy news:
Nay, come, I pray thee, speak;—good, good nurse, speak.

NURSE.

Jesu,[4] what haste? can you not stay[5] awhile?
Do you not see that I am out of breath?

---

[1] **affections**: normal feelings.
[2] **bandy**: toss; hurry.
[3] **feign**: appear.
[4] **Jesu**: Jesus (an oath).
[5] **stay**: wait.

JULIET.

How art thou out of breath, when thou hast breath
To say to me that thou art out of breath?
The excuse that thou dost make in this delay
Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.
Is thy news good or bad? answer to that;
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance:[1]
Let me be satisfied,[2] is't good or bad?

NURSE.

Well, you have made a simple choice; you know not how to choose a man: Romeo! no, not he; though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all men's; and for a hand, and a foot, and a body,—though they be not to be talkt on,[3] yet they are past compare: he is not the flower of courtesy, but, I'll warrant him, as gentle as a lamb.—Go thy ways, wench; serve God.—What, have you dined at home?

JULIET.

No, no: but all this did I know before.
What says he of our marriage? what of that?

NURSE.

Lord, how my head aches! what a head have I!
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.
My back o' t' other side,—ah, my back, my back!—
Beshrew[4] your heart for sending me about,
To catch my death with jauncing up and down!

JULIET.

I'faith, I am sorry that thou art not well.
Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?

---

[1] **stay the circumstance:** wait to hear the details.
[2] **satisfied:** told.
[3] **talkt on:** dwelt on.
[4] **beshrew:** curse (a gentle oath).

NURSE.

Your love says, like an honest[1] gentleman, and a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome, and, I warrant, a virtuous,—Where is your mother?

JULIET.

Where is my mother!—why, she is within;
Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest!
'Your love says, like an honest gentleman,—
Where is your mother?'

NURSE.

O God's lady dear!
Are you so hot? marry, come up, I trow;[2]
Is this the poultice for my aching bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

JULIET.

Here's such a coil![3]—come, what says Romeo?

NURSE.

Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

JULIET.

I have.

NURSE.

Then hie you[4] hence to Friar Laurence' cell;
There stays[5] a husband to make you a wife:
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
They'll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church; I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird's-nest soon when it is dark:
I am the drudge, and toil in your delight;
But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
Go; I'll to dinner; hie you to the cell.

JULIET.

Hie to high fortune!—Honest nurse, farewell. [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] **honest:** honorable.
[2] **come up, I trow:** control yourself, I do declare.
[3] **coil:** fuss; to-do.
[4] **hie you:** hurry.
[5] **stays:** awaits.

Scene V.

FRIAR LAURENCE'S *cell.*

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE *and* ROMEO.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

So smile the heavens upon this holy act,
That after-hours with sorrow chide us not! [1]

ROMEO.

Amen, amen! but come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail [2] the exchange of joy
That one short minute gives me in her sight:
Do thou but close our hands with holy words,
Then love-devouring death do what he dare,—
It is enough I may but call her mine.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

These violent delights have violent ends,
And in their triumph die; like fire and powder,
Which, as they kiss, consume: the sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness,[3]
And in the taste confounds[4] the appetite:
Therefore, love moderately; long love doth so;
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.[5]—
Here comes the lady:—O, so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint:
A lover may bestride the gossamer[6]
That idles in the wanton summer air,
And yet not fall; so light is vanity.[7]

Enter JULIET *somewhat fast, and embraceth* ROMEO.

JULIET.

Good even to my ghostly confessor.

---

[1] That after-hours with sorrow chide us not: that subsequent events do not bring sorrow upon us. [2] countervail: counterbalance. [3] Is loathsome in his own deliciousness: is cloying in its excess of sweetness. [4] confounds: destroys. [5] Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow: in other words, haste makes waste. [6] gossamer: thistledown. [7] vanity: the pursuit of trivial delights.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.

JULIET.

As much to him, else is his thanks too much.

ROMEO.

Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy
Be heapt like mine, and that thy skill be more
To blazon[1] it, then sweeten with thy breath
This neighbour[2] air, and let rich music's tongue
Unfold the imagined happiness that both
Receive in either by this dear encounter.

JULIET.

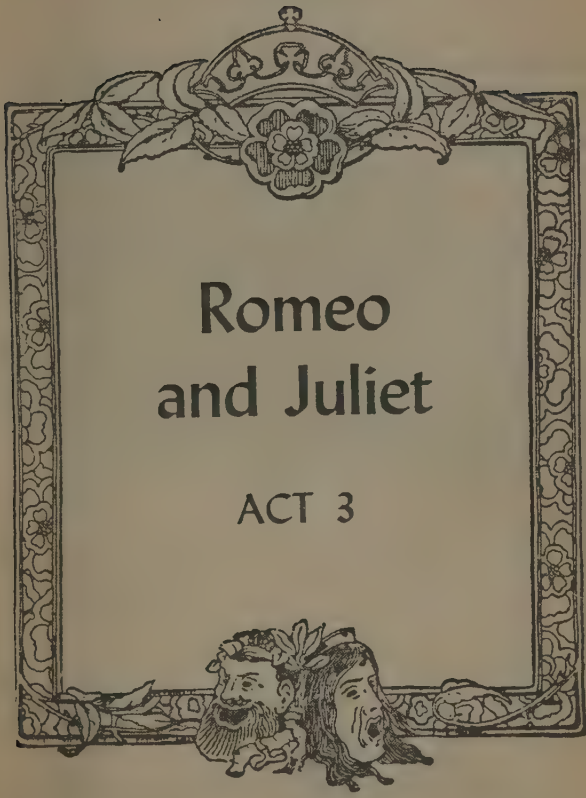
Conceit,[3] more rich in matter than in words,
Brags of his substance, not of ornament:
They are but beggars that can count their worth;
But my true love is grown to such excess,
I cannot sum up sum of half my wealth.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Come, come with me, and we will make short work;
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone
Till holy church incorporate two in one. [*Exeunt*

---

[1] **blazon:** trumpet forth.
[2] **neighbour:** surrounding.
[3] **conceit:** imagination.



Romeo and Juliet

ACT 3

ACT III

In a street brawl, Mercutio is slain by Tybalt; Romeo, avenging his friend's life, fights and kills Tybalt. He flees, taking refuge with Friar Lawrence, who brings him word of the Prince's sentence of banishment on him. Meanwhile, Juliet, awaiting her bridegroom, is told of his banishment by her Nurse. At the urging of Friar Lawrence and the Nurse, Romeo recovers from his fit of despair and joins Juliet for one night before he leaves the country. Meanwhile, Capulet has decided that his daughter must wed Paris and has set the day of the wedding for Thursday, three days hence. Juliet defies her parents, refusing to consider marriage, but her father will hear of no disobedience to his wishes and of no delay. She is to marry, as he commands her, or to be cast out on the streets to beg. Finally, her Nurse, her last support, betrays Juliet's faith by advising compliance with her father's wishes. As the Act ends, Juliet, in desperation, is going to Friar Lawrence for counsel.

ACT III. Scene I.

Verona. A public place.

Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, PAGE, *and* SERVANTS.

BENVOLIO.

I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire:
The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,
And if we meet, we shall not scape[1] a brawl;
For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

MERCUTIO.

Thou art like one of those fellows that, when he enters the confines of a tavern, claps me his sword upon the table, and

[1] **scape:** escape.

says, 'God send me no need of thee!' and, by the operation[1] of the second cup, draws it on the drawer,[2] when, indeed, there is no need.

BENVOLIO.

Am I like such a fellow?

MERCUTIO.

Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy;[3] and as soon moved to be moody,[4] and as soon moody to be moved.

BENVOLIO.

And what to?

MERCUTIO.

Nay, an there were two[5] such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou! why, thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more or a hair less in his beard than thou hast: thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes;—what eye, but such an eye, would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat; and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg for quarrelling: thou hast quarrell'd with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath waken'd thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun: didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? with another, for tying his new shoes with old riband? and yet thou wilt tutor me from quarrelling!

BENVOLIO.

An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy

---

[1] operation: effect.

[2] drawer: waiter.

[3] as hot a Jack . . . as any in Italy: as ready for a quarrel as any man in Italy.

[4] as soon moved to be moody: as easily angered.

[5] two: Mercutio chooses to misunderstand Benvolio's *to*.

the fee-simple[1] of my life for an hour and a quarter.[2]

MERCUTIO.

The fee-simple! O simple!

Enter TYBALT *and others.*

BENVOLIO.

By my head, here come the Capulets.

MERCUTIO.

By my heel, I care not.

TYBALT.

Follow me close, for I will speak to them.—Gentlemen, good den: a word with one of you.

MERCUTIO.

And but one word with one of us? couple it with something; make it a word and a blow.

TYBALT.

You shall find me apt enough to that, sir, an you will give me occasion.

MERCUTIO.

Could you not take some occasion without giving?

TYBALT.

Mercutio, thou consort'st[3] with Romeo,—

MERCUTIO.

Consort! [4] what, dost thou make us minstrels? an thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords: here's my fiddlestick; here's that shall make you dance. Zounds,[5] consort!

BENVOLIO.

We talk here in the public haunt of men:
Either withdraw unto some private place,

---

[1] **fee-simple:** absolute ownership.
[2] **for an hour and a quarter:** a trifling amount.
[3] **consort'st with:** keep company with.
[4] **Consort:** a quibble on the other meaning of consort—a company of musicians.
[5] **Zounds:** God's wounds (a mild oath).

And reason coldly of your grievances,
Or else depart;[1] here all eyes gaze on us.

MERCUTIO.

Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze;
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

TYBALT.

Well, peace be with you, sir:—here comes my man.

Enter ROMEO.

MERCUTIO.

But I'll be hang'd, sir, if he wear your livery:
Marry, go before to field,[2] he'll be your follower;
Your worship in that sense may call him man.

TYBALT.

Romeo, the hate I bear thee can afford
No better term than this,—thou art a villain.[3]

ROMEO.

Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee
Doth much excuse the appertaining rage[4]
To such a greeting:—villain am I none:
Therefore farewell; I see thou know'st me not.

TYBALT.

Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries
That thou hast done me; therefore turn, and draw.

ROMEO.

I do protest I never injured thee;
But love thee better than thou canst devise,[5]
Till thou shalt know the reason of my love:
And so, good Capulet,—which name I tender[6]
As dearly as my own,—be satisfied.

MERCUTIO.

O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!
Alla stoccata[7] carries it away.— [*Draws.*
Tybalt, you rat-catcher,[8] will you walk? [9]

---

[1] **depart:** part. [2] **to field:** to combat. [3] **a villain:** of low birth. [4] **appertaining rage:** rage appertaining (appropriate) to. [5] **devise:** understand. [6] **tender:** cherish. [7] ***Alla stoccata:*** at the thrust. [8] **rat-catcher:** an allusion to Tybalt's name—king of cats. [9] **will you walk:** will you accept the challenge.

TYBALT.

What wouldst thou have with me?

MERCUTIO.

Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives; that I mean to make bold withal, and, as you shall use me hereafter, dry-beat[1] the rest of the eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his pilcher[2] by the ears? make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

TYBALT.

I am for you. [*Drawing.*

ROMEO.

Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

MERCUTIO.

Come, sir, your passado.[3] [*They fight.*

ROMEO.

Draw, Benvolio; beat down their weapons.—
Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage!
Tybalt,—Mercutio,—the prince expressly hath
Forbidden bandying in Verona streets:—
Hold, Tybalt!—good Mercutio,—

[TYBALT *under* ROMEO'S *arm thrusts* MERCUTIO, *and flies.*

MERCUTIO.

I am hurt;—
A plague o' both your houses!—I am sped:—
Is he gone, and hath nothing?

BENVOLIO.

What, art thou hurt?

MERCUTIO.

Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry, 'tis enough.
Where is my page?—Go, villain, fetch a surgeon.

[*Exit* PAGE.

---

[1] **dry-beat:** beat severely.
[2] **pilcher:** scabbard.
[3] **passado:** a thrust in fencing.

ROMEO.

Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

MERCUTIO.

No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve: ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man.[1] I am pepper'd,[2] I warrant, for this world:—a plague o' both your houses!—Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! a braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic![3]—Why, the devil, came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

ROMEO.

I thought all for the best.

MERCUTIO.

Help me into some house, Benvolio,
Or I shall faint.—A plague o' both your houses!
They have made worms'-meat of me: I have it,[4]
And soundly too:—your houses![5]

[*Exit, led by* BENVOLIO *and* SERVANTS.

ROMEO.

This gentleman, the prince's near ally,
My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt
In my behalf; my reputation stain'd
With Tybalt's slander,—Tybalt, that an hour
Hath been my kinsman:—O sweet Juliet,
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate,
And in my temper soften'd valour's steel!

Enter BENVOLIO.

BENVOLIO.

O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio's dead!
That gallant spirit hath aspired[6] the clouds,
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

---

[1] **a grave man:** a man in his grave. [2] **pepper'd:** through, or finished, with this world. [3] **the book of arithmetic:** a book with the rules and diagrams of fencing. [4] **I have it:** I am finished, done for. [5] **your houses:** Mercutio is too weak to say the full phrase—"a plague o' both your houses." [6] **aspired:** aspired to.

ROMEO.

This day's black fate on more days doth depend;[1]
This but begins the woe others must end.

Enter TYBALT.

BENVOLIO.

Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

ROMEO.

Alive, in triumph! and Mercutio slain!
Away to heaven respective lenity,[2]
And fire-eyed fury be my conduct now!
Now, Tybalt, take the 'villain' back again
That late thou gavest me; for Mercutio's soul
Is but a little way above our heads,
Staying for thine to keep him company:
Either thou or I, or both, must go with him.

TYBALT.

Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him here,
Shalt with him hence.

ROMEO.

This shall determine that.

[*They fight;* TYBALT *falls.*

BENVOLIO.

Romeo, away, be gone!
The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain:—
Stand not amazed:[3]—the prince will doom the death,
If thou art taken:—hence, be gone, away!

ROMEO.

O, I am fortune's fool![4]

BENVOLIO.

Why dost thou stay?

[*Exit* ROMEO.

---

[1] **This day's black fate on more days doth depend:** this day's tragedy presages more tragic events in the days to come.
[2] **respective lenity:** considerate gentleness.
[3] **amazed:** struck dumb, as one in a trance.
[4] **fool:** plaything.

Enter CITIZENS *and* OFFICERS.

FIRST OFFICER.
Which way ran he that kill'd Mercutio?
Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he?

BENVOLIO.
There lies that Tybalt.

FIRST OFFICER.
Up, sir, go with me;
I charge thee in the prince's name, obey.

Enter PRINCE, *old* MONTAGUE, CAPULET, *their* WIVES *and all.*

PRINCE ESCALUS.
Where are the vile beginners of this fray?

BENVOLIO.
O noble prince, I can discover all
The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl:[1]
There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.

LADY CAPULET.
Tybalt, my cousin! O my brother's child!
O prince! O cousin! husband! O, the blood is spilt
Of my dear kinsman! Prince, as thou art true,
For blood of ours shed blood of Montague.—
O cousin, cousin!

PRINCE ESCALUS.
Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

BENVOLIO.
Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay;
Romeo, that spoke him fair, bade him bethink
How nice[2] the quarrel was, and urged withal
Your high displeasure:—all this—uttered
With gentle breath,[3] calm look, knees humbly bow'd—

[1] **I can discover all/The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl:** I can give you all the details of these fatal stabbings.
[2] **nice:** trifling; unimportant.
[3] **with gentle breath:** in a mild and conciliatory tone.

Could not take truce with the unruly spleen[1]
Of Tybalt deaf to peace, but that he tilts
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast;
Who, all as hot,[2] turns deadly point to point,
And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats
Cold death aside, and with the other sends
It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity
Retorts it:[3] Romeo he cries aloud,
'Hold, friends! friends, part!' and, swifter than his tongue,
His agile arm beats down their fatal points,
And 'twixt them rushes; underneath whose arm
An envious[4] thrust from Tybalt hit the life
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled:
But by and by comes back to Romeo,
Who had but newly entertain'd revenge,
And to't they go like lightning; for, ere I
Could draw to part them, was stout Tybalt slain;
And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly:—
This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

LADY CAPULET.

He is a kinsman to the Montague,
Affection[5] makes him false, he speaks not true:
Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,
And all those twenty could but kill one life.
I beg for justice, which thou, prince, must give;
Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

PRINCE ESCALUS.

Romeo slew him, he slew Mercutio;
Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe?

MONTAGUE.

Not Romeo, prince, he was Mercutio's friend;
His fault concludes but what the law should end,
The life of Tybalt.

---

[1] **unruly spleen:** ungovernable temper.
[2] **all as hot:** just as angry.
[3] **retorts:** returns.
[4] **An envious:** a malicious.
[5] **Affection:** his natural sense of loyalty to his friend.

PRINCE ESCALUS.

And for that offence
Immediately we do exile him hence:
I have an interest in your hate's proceeding,[1]
My blood [2] for your rude brawls doth lie a-bleeding;
But I'll amerce[3] you with so strong a fine,
That you shall all repent the loss of mine:
I will be deaf to pleading and excuses;
Nor tears nor prayers shall purchase out abuses,[4]
Therefore use none: let Romeo hence in haste,
Else, when he's found, that hour is his last.
Bear hence this body, and attend our will:
Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

CAPULET'S *orchard.*

Enter JULIET.

JULIET.

Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
Towards Phœbus' [5] lodging: such a wagoner
As Phaethon[6] would whip you to the west,
And bring in cloudy night immediately.
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,
That runaway's eyes may wink, and Romeo
Leap to these arms untalkt-of and unseen.
Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
By their own beauties; or, if love be blind,
It best agrees with night.—Come, civil night,[7]
Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,
And learn[8] me how to lose a winning match,
Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods:

---

[1] **hate's proceeding:** the brawl that followed enmity between the two factions. [2] **My blood:** my kinsman. [3] **amerce:** punish. [4] **purchase out abuses:** take away guilt, or cause me to change my mind. [5] **Phœbus:** Phoebus Apollo, god of the sun. [6] **Phaeton:** son of Apollo; inexperienced in driving the sun chariot, Phaeton caused chaos. [7] **civil night:** grave night. [8] **learn:** teach.

Hood my unmann'd blood, bating[1] in my cheeks,
With thy black mantle; till strange[2] love, grown bold,
Think true love acted simple modesty.
Come, night; come, Romeo; come, thou day in night;
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.—
Come, gentle night,—come, loving, black-brow'd night,
Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine,
That all the world will be in love with night,
And pay no worship to the garish sun.—
O, I have bought the mansion of a love,
But not possest it; and, though I am sold,
Not yet enjoy'd: so tedious is this day,
As is the night before some festival
To an impatient child that hath new robes
And may not wear them.—O, here comes my nurse,
And she brings news; and every tongue that speaks
But Romeo's name speaks heavenly eloquence.

Enter NURSE, *wringing her hands, with the ladder of cords in her lap.*

Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there? the cords
That Romeo bid thee fetch?

NURSE.

Ay, ay, the cords.
[*Throws them down.*

[1] **Hood, unmann'd,** and **bating** are all terms in falconry; **hood:** the cap used to hoodwink the hawk; **unmann'd:** not sufficiently trained to know her keeper; **bating:** fluttering.
[2] **strange:** reserved.

JULIET.

Ay me! what news? why dost thou wring thy hands?

NURSE.

Ah, well-a-day![1] he's dead, he's dead, he's dead!
We are undone, lady, we are undone!—
Alack the day!—he's gone, he's kill'd, he's dead!

JULIET.

Can heaven be so envious?[2]

NURSE.

Romeo can,
Though heaven cannot:—O Romeo, Romeo!—
Who ever would have thought it?—Romeo!

JULIET.

What devil art thou, that dost torment me thus?
This torture should be roar'd in dismal hell.
Hath Romeo slain himself? say thou but 'I,'[3]
And that bare vowel 'I' shall poison more
Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice:[4]
I am not I, if there be such an 'I;'
Or those eyes shut, that make thee answer 'I.'
If he be slain, say 'I;' or if not, 'no:'
Brief sounds determine of my weal or woe.

NURSE.

I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes,—
God save the mark![5]—here on his manly breast:
A piteous corse,[6] a bloody piteous corse;
Pale, pale as ashes, all bedaub'd in blood,
All in gore-blood:[7]—I swounded[8] at the sight.

JULIET.

O, break, my heart! poor bankrout,[9] break at once!
To prison, eyes, ne'er look on liberty!

---

[1] **well-a-day:** used to express sorrow or lamentation. [2] **envious:** malicious. [3] **'I':** ay; yes. [4] **cockatrice:** an imaginary creature having the head of a cock and the form of a serpent; a glance from its eyes could kill. [5] **God save the mark:** the origin of this phrase is obscure. [6] **corse:** corpse. [7] **gore-blood:** clotted blood. [8] **swounded:** swooned; fainted. [9] **bankrout:** bankrupt.

Vile earth, to earth resign; end motion[1] here;
And thou and Romeo press one heavy bier!

NURSE.

O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had!
O courteous Tybalt! honest[2] gentleman!
That ever I should live to see thee dead!

JULIET.

What storm is this that blows so contrary?
Is Romeo slaughter'd, and is Tybalt dead?
My dear-loved cousin, and my dearer lord?—
Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general doom!
For who is living, if those two are gone?

NURSE.

Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished;
Romeo that kill'd him, he is banished.

JULIET.

O God! did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?

NURSE.

It did, it did; alas the day, it did!

JULIET.

O serpent heart, hid with a flow'ring[3] face!
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!
Dove-feather'd raven! wolvish-ravening lamb!
Despised substance of divinest show!
Just opposite to what thou justly[4] seem'st,
A damned saint, an honourable villain!—
O nature, what hadst thou to do in hell,
When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend
In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh?
Was ever book containing such vile matter
So fairly bound? O, that deceit should dwell
In such a gorgeous palace!

---

[1] **motion:** life.
[2] **honest:** honorable.
[3] **flow'ring:** handsome.
[4] **justly:** really.

NURSE.

There's no trust,
No faith, no honesty in men; all perjured,
All forsworn,[1] all naught, all dissemblers.[2]—
Ah, where's my man? give me some *aqua-vitæ:*[3]—
These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.
Shame come to Romeo!

JULIET.

Blister'd be thy tongue
For such a wish! he was not born to shame:
Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit;
For 'tis a throne where honour may be crown'd
Sole monarch of the universal earth.
O, what a beast was I to chide at him!

NURSE.

Will you speak well of him that kill'd your cousin?

JULIET.

Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?
Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth[4] thy name,
When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it?—
But wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?
That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband:
Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring;
Your tributary drops belong to woe,
Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.
My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;
And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my husband:
All this is comfort; wherefore weep I, then?
Some word there was, worser than Tybalt's death,
That murder'd me: I would forget it fain;[5]

---

[1] **All forsworn:** all breakers of oaths.
[2] **dissemblers:** deceivers.
[3] ***aqua-vitæ:*** brandy.
[4] **smooth:** flatter; speak well of.
[5] **fain:** gladly.

But, O, it presses to my memory
Like damned guilty deeds to sinners' minds:
'Tybalt is dead, and Romeo—banished;'
That 'banished,' that one word 'banished,'
Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts.[1] Tybalt's death
Was woe enough, if it had ended there:
Or,—if sour woe delights in fellowship,[2]
And needly will be rankt with other griefs,—
Why follow'd not, when she said 'Tybalt's dead,'
Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both,
Which modern[3] lamentation might have moved?
But with a rear-ward following Tybalt's death,
'Romeo is banished,'—to speak that word,
Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
All slain, all dead:—'Romeo is banished,'—
There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
In that word's death; no words can that woe sound.—
Where is my father, and my mother, nurse?

NURSE.

Weeping and wailing over Tybalt's corse:
Will you go to them? I will bring you thither.

JULIET.

Wash they his wounds with tears: mine shall be spent,
When theirs are dry, for Romeo's banishment.
Take up those cords:—poor ropes, you are beguiled,[4]
Both you and I; for Romeo is exiled:
He made you for a highway to my bed;
But I, a maid, die maiden-widowed.
Come, cords; come, nurse; I'll to my wedding-bed;
And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead!

---

[1] **Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts:** that is, Romeo's banishment is worse than the loss of ten thousand Tybalts. [2] **sour woe delights in fellowship:** this corresponds to the proverbial phrase, "Misfortunes never come singly," or to "When sorrows come, they come not single spies/But in battalions!"—Hamlet, IV, 5. [3] **modern:** trite; ordinary. [4] **beguiled:** cheated.

NURSE.

Hie[1] to your chamber: I'll find Romeo
To comfort you:—I wot[2] well where he is.
Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night:
I'll to him; he is hid at Laurence' cell.

JULIET.

O, find him! give this ring to my true knight,
And bid him come to take his last farewell. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

FRIAR LAURENCE'S *cell.*

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Romeo, come forth; come forth, thou fearful man:
Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts,[3]
And thou art wedded to calamity.

Enter ROMEO.

ROMEO.

Father, what news? what is the prince's doom?[4]
What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand,
That I yet know not?

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Too familiar
Is my dear son with such sour company:[5]
I bring thee tidings of the prince's doom.

ROMEO.

What less than doomsday is the prince's doom?

FRIAR LAURENCE.

A gentler judgement—'banisht'—from his lips;
Not body's death, but body's banishment.

ROMEO.

Ha, banishment! be merciful, say 'death;'

---

[1] hie: hurry.
[2] wot: know.
[3] Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts: i.e., you attract misfortune.
[4] doom: sentence.
[5] sour company: mournful thoughts.

For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more than death: do not say 'banishment.'

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Hence from Verona art thou banished:
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.

ROMEO.

There is no world without Verona walls,
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.
Hence-banished is banisht from the world,
And world's exile is death:—then 'banished'
Is death mis-term'd: calling death 'banished,'
Thou cutt'st my head off with a golden axe,
And smilest upon the stroke that murders me.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

O deadly sin! O rude unthankfulness!
Thy fault our law calls death; but the kind prince,
Taking thy part, hath rusht aside the law,
And turn'd that black word death to banishment:
This is dear mercy,[1] and thou seest it not.

ROMEO.

'Tis torture, and not mercy: heaven is here,
Where Juliet lives; and every cat, and dog,
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,
Live here in heaven, and may look on her;
But Romeo may not:—more validity,[2]
More honourable state, more courtship[3] lives
In carrion-flies than Romeo: they may seize
On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,
And steal immortal blessing from her lips;
Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin;
But Romeo may not,—he is banished:

---

[1] **dear mercy**: mercy of the highest sort.
[2] **validity**: worth; value.
[3] **courtship**: courtesy; fine behavior.

This may flies do, when I from this must fly:—
And say'st thou yet, that exile is not death?
Hadst thou no poison mixt, no sharp-ground knife,
No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,[1]
But 'banished' to kill me,—'banished'?
O friar, the damned use that word in hell;
Howling attends it: how hast thou the heart,
Being a divine, a ghostly[2] confessor,
A sin-absolver, and my friend profest,
To mangle[3] me with that word 'banished'?

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Thou fond [4] mad man, hear me a little speak.

ROMEO.

O, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

I'll give thee armour to keep off that word;[5]
Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy,
To comfort thee, though thou art banished.

ROMEO.

Yet 'banished'?—Hang up philosophy!
Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,
Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom,
It helps not, it prevails not: talk no more.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

O, then I see that madmen have no ears.

ROMEO.

How should they, when that wise men have no eyes?

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Let me dispute[6] with thee of thy estate.[7]

ROMEO.

Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel:

---

[1] mean . . . mean: way . . . low. [2] ghastly: holy; spiritual. [3] mangle: torture. [4] fond: foolish. [5] I'll give thee armour to keep off that word: I'll give you something to sustain you in your banishment. [6] dispute: discuss; talk over. [7] thy estate: your affairs; your present state.

Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,
An hour but married, Tybalt murdered,
Doting[1] like me, and like me banished,
Then mightst thou speak, then mightst thou tear thy hair,
And fall upon the ground, as I do now,
Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

[NURSE *knocks.*

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Arise; one knocks; good Romeo, hide thyself.

ROMEO.

Not I; unless the breath of heart-sick groans,
Mist-like, infold[2] me from the search of eyes.

[*She knocks again.*

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Hark, how they knock!—Who's there?—Romeo, arise;
Thou wilt be taken.—Stay awhile!—Stand up; [*Knock.*
Run to my study.—By and by!—God's will,
What simpleness is this!—I come, I come! [*Knock.*
Who knocks so hard? whence come you? what's your will?

NURSE [*within*].

Let me come in, and you shall know my errand;
I come from Lady Juliet.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Welcome, then.

Enter NURSE.

NURSE.

O holy friar, O, tell me, holy friar,
Where is my lady's lord, where's Romeo?

---

[1] **Doting:** in love.
[2] **infold:** hide.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

There on the ground, with his own tears made drunk.

NURSE.

O, he is even[1] in my mistress' case,
Just in her case! [2]

FRIAR LAURENCE.

O woeful sympathy!
Piteous predicament!

NURSE.

Even so lies she,
Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering.—
Stand up, stand up; stand, an you be a man:
For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand,
Why should you fall into so deep an O? [3] [*He rises.*

ROMEO.

Nurse!—

NURSE.

Ah sir! ah sir!—Well, death's the end of all.

ROMEO.

Spakest thou of Juliet? how is it with her?
Doth she not think me an old [4] murderer,
Now I have stain'd the childhood of our joy
With blood removed but little from her own?
Where is she? and how doth she? and what says
My conceal'd [5] lady to our cancell'd love?

NURSE.

O, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps;
And now falls on her bed; and then starts up,
And Tybalt calls; and then on Romeo cries,
And then down falls again.

---

[1] **even:** exactly.
[2] **case:** condition.
[3] **an O:** a grief; a depression.
[4] **old:** confirmed; "old" is often used as a disparaging word.
[5] **conceal'd:** secretly married.

ROMEO.

As if that name,
Shot from the deadly level [1] of a gun,
Did murder her; as that name's cursed hand
Murder'd her kinsman.—O, tell me, friar, tell me,
In what vile part of this anatomy
Doth my name lodge? tell me, that I may sack[2]
The hateful mansion.

[*He offers to stab himself, and* NURSE *snatches the dagger away.*

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Hold thy desperate hand:
Art thou a man? thy form cries out thou art:
Thy tears are womanish; thy wild acts denote
The unreasonable fury of a beast:
Unseemly woman in a seeming man!
Or ill-beseeming beast in seeming both!
Thou hast amazed me: by my holy order,
I thought thy disposition better temper'd.
Hast thou slain Tybalt? wilt thou slay thyself?
And slay thy lady that in thy life lives,
By doing damned hate upon thyself?
Why rail'st thou on[3] thy birth, the heaven, and earth?
Since birth, and heaven, and earth, all three do meet
In thee at once; which thou at once wouldst lose.
Fie, fie, thou shamest thy shape, thy love, thy wit;
Which, like a usurer, abound'st in all,
And usest none in that true use indeed
Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit:
Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,
Digressing from the valour of a man;
Thy dear love, sworn, but hollow perjury,
Killing that love which thou hast vow'd to cherish;

---

[1] level: line of aim.
[2] sack: destroy.
[3] Why rail'st thou on: why do you cry out against.

Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,
Mis-shapen[1] in the conduct of them both,
Like powder in a skilless soldier's flask,
Is set a-fire by thine own ignorance,
And thou dismember'd[2] with thine own defence.
What, rouse thee, man! thy Juliet is alive,
For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead;
There art thou happy:[3] Tybalt would kill thee,
But thou slew'st Tybalt; there art thou happy too:
The law, that threaten'd death, becomes thy friend,
And turns it to exile; there art thou happy:
A pack of blessings lights upon thy back;
Happiness courts thee in her best array;
But, like a misbehaved and sullen wench,
Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love:—
Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.
Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed,
Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her:
But look thou stay not till the watch be set,
For then thou canst not pass to Mantua;
Where thou shalt live, till we can find a time
To blaze[4] your marriage, reconcile your friends,
Beg pardon of the prince, and call thee back
With twenty hundred thousand times more joy
Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.—
Go before, nurse: commend me to thy lady;
And bid her hasten all the house to bed,
Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto:[5]
Romeo is coming.

NURSE.

O Lord, I could have stay'd here all the night
To hear good counsel: O, what learning is!—

---

[1] **Mis-shapen:** distorted.
[2] **dismember'd:** torn apart.
[3] **happy:** fortunate.
[4] **blaze:** blazon; announce.
[5] **apt unto:** ready to do.

My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

ROMEO.

Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide.[1]

NURSE.

Here is a ring, sir, that she bade me give you:

[NURSE *offers to go in and turns again.*

Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late. [*Exit.*

ROMEO.

How well my comfort[2] is revived by this!

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Go hence; good night; and here stands all your state:[3]—
Either be gone before the watch be set,
Or by the break of day disguised from hence:
Sojourn in Mantua; I'll find out your man,
And he shall signify from time to time
Every good hap[4] to you that chances here:
Give me thy hand; 'tis late: farewell; good night.

ROMEO.

But that a joy past joy calls out on me,
It were a grief so brief to part with thee:
Farewell. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

A room in CAPULET'S *house.*

Enter old CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, *and* COUNTY PARIS.

CAPULET.

Things have faln out, sir, so unluckily,
That we have had no time to move[5] our daughter:
Look you, she loved her kinsman Tybalt dearly,

---

[1] **chide**: scold.
[2] **comfort**: feeling of well-being.
[3] **here stands all your state**: your entire fortune depends on this.
[4] **good hap**: good fortune.
[5] **move**: influence.

And so did I:—well, we were born to die.
'Tis very late, she'll not come down to-night:
I promise you, but for your company,
I would have been a-bed an hour ago.

PARIS.

These times of woe afford no time to woo.—
Madam, good night: commend me to your daughter.

LADY CAPULET.

I will, and know her mind early to-morrow;
To-night she's mew'd up[1] to her heaviness.

[PARIS *offers to go in and* CAPULET *calls him again.*

CAPULET.

Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender[2]
Of my child's love: I think she will be ruled
In all respects by me;[3] nay, more, I doubt it not.—
Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed;
Acquaint her here of my son Paris' love;
And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next—
But, soft! what day is this?

PARIS.

Monday, my lord.

CAPULET.

Monday! ha, ha! Well, Wednesday is too soon,
O' Thursday let it be:—o' Thursday, tell her,
She shall be married to this noble earl.—
Will you be ready? do you like this haste?
We'll keep no great ado,[4]—a friend or two;
For, hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,
It may be thought we held him carelessly,[5]

---

[1] **mew'd up**: cooped up; a reference to the place where a hawk was put while molting. [2] **desperate tender**: bold promise or offer. [3] **be ruled/In all respects by me**: be obedient to my every wish. [4] **keep no great ado**: have no great ceremony or festival. [5] **held him carelessly**: held him in little regard.

Being our kinsman, if we revel much:
Therefore we'll have some half-a-dozen friends,
And there an end.[1] But what say you to Thursday?

PARIS.

My lord, I would that Thursday were to-morrow.

CAPULET.

Well, get you gone:—o' Thursday be it, then.—
Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed,
Prepare her, wife, against this wedding-day.—
Farewell, my lord.—Light to my chamber, ho!—
Afore me, it is so very late, that we
May call it early by and by:—good night. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V.

JULIET'S *chamber.*

Enter ROMEO *and* JULIET *at the window.*

JULIET.

Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear;
Nightly she sings on yond pomegranate-tree:
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

ROMEO.

It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace[2] the severing clouds in yonder east:
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund[3] day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

JULIET.

Yond light is not day-light, I know it, I:
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,

---

[1] **And there an end:** and that's all.
[2] **lace:** decorate.
[3] **jocund:** cheerful; merry.

And light thee on thy way to Mantua:
Therefore stay yet,—thou need'st not to be gone.

ROMEO.

Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
I'll say yon gray is not the morning's eye,[1]
'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's[2] brow;
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
The vaulty[3] heaven so high above our heads:
I have more care[4] to stay than will to go:—
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.—
How is't, my soul? let's talk,—it is not day.

JULIET.

It is, it is,—hie hence, be gone, away!
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.
Some say the lark makes sweet division;[5]
This doth not so, for she divideth us:
Some say the lark and loathed toad change eyes;
O, now I would they had changed voices too!
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,[6]
Hunting thee hence with hunt's-up[7] to the day.
O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.

ROMEO.

More light and light,—more dark and dark our woes!

Enter NURSE.

NURSE.

Madam!

JULIET.

Nurse?

NURSE.

Your lady mother is coming to your chamber:

---

[1] **yon gray is not the morning's eye:** the dim light in the east does not herald the sun. [2] **Cynthia:** one of the names for Diana, the moon goddess, whose birthplace was Mount Cynthus. [3] **vaulty:** vaulted. [4] **care:** wish. [5] **division:** in music, a variation of melody on a basic harmony. [6] **affray:** frighten away. [7] **hunt's-up:** a tune played below a huntsman's window to waken him.

The day is broke; be wary, look about. [*Exit.*

JULIET.

Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

ROMEO.

Farewell, farewell! one kiss, and I'll descend.

[*He goeth down.*

JULIET.

Art thou gone so? my lord, my love, my friend!
I must hear from thee every day in the hour,
For in a minute there are many days:
O, by this count I shall be much in years[1]
Ere I again behold my Romeo!

ROMEO.

Farewell!
I will omit no opportunity
That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

JULIET.

O, think'st thou we shall ever meet again?

ROMEO.

I doubt it not; and all these woes shall serve
For sweet discourses in our time to come.

JULIET.

O God, I have an ill-divining[2] soul!
Methinks I see thee, now thou art below,
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb:
Either my eyesight fails, or thou look'st pale.

ROMEO.

And trust me, love, in my eye so do you:
Dry sorrow drinks our blood.[3] Adieu, adieu!

[*Exit below.*

JULIET.

O fortune, fortune! all men call thee fickle:
If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him

---

[1] **much in years:** much older; an old woman.
[2] **ill-divining:** able to foresee bad things to come; a presentiment.
[3] **Dry sorrow drinks our blood:** it was an old belief that sorrow sapped the heart's blood.

That is renown'd for faith? Be fickle, fortune;
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,
But send him back.

LADY CAPULET [*within*].

Ho, daughter! are you up?

JULIET.

Who is't that calls? is it my lady mother?
Is she not down so late, or up so early?
What unaccustom'd cause procures[1] her hither?

Enter LADY CAPULET.

LADY CAPULET.

Why, how now, Juliet!

JULIET.

Madam, I am not well.

LADY CAPULET.

Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?
What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?
An if thou couldst, thou couldst not make him live;
Therefore have done: some grief shows much of love;
But much of grief shows still some want of wit.[2]

JULIET.

Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.[3]

LADY CAPULET.

So shall you feel the loss, but not the friend
Which you weep for.

JULIET.

Feeling so the loss,
I cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

LADY CAPULET.

Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his death,

---

[1] **procures:** brings.
[2] **want of wit:** lack of wisdom or sense.
[3] **for such a feeling loss:** for a loss felt so deeply.

As that the villain lives which slaughter'd him.

JULIET.

What villain, madam?

LADY CAPULET.

That same villain, Romeo.

JULIET [*aside*].

Villain and he be many miles asunder.[1]—
God pardon him! I do, with all my heart;
And yet no man like he doth grieve my heart.

LADY CAPULET.

That is because the traitor murderer lives.

JULIET.

Ay, madam, from the reach of these my hands:—
Would none but I might venge[2] my cousin's death!

LADY CAPULET.

We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not:
Then weep no more. I'll send to one in Mantua,—
Where that same banisht runagate[3] doth live,—
Shall give him such an unaccustom'd dram,[4]
That he shall soon keep Tybalt company:
And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied.

JULIET.

Indeed, I never shall be satisfied
With Romeo, till I behold him—dead—
Is my poor heart so for a kinsman vext:[5]
Madam, if you could find out but a man
To bear a poison, I would temper[6] it;
That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,
Soon sleep in quiet. O, how my heart abhors
To hear him named,—and cannot come to him,
To wreak the love I bore my cousin Tybalt
Upon his body that hath slaughter'd him!

---

[1] **asunder:** apart; away. [2] **venge:** avenge. [3] **runagate:** runaway. [4] **unaccustom'd dram:** poison. [5] **vext:** disturbed. [6] **temper:** Juliet intends to weaken the poison, but her mother is to assume that she will make it more deadly.

LADY CAPULET.

Find thou the means, and I'll find such a man.
But now I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

JULIET.

And joy comes well in such a needful time:
What are they, I beseech your ladyship?

LADY CAPULET.

Well, well, thou hast a careful [1] father, child;
One who, to put thee from thy heaviness,[2]
Hath sorted out[3] a sudden day of joy,
That thou expect'st not, nor I lookt not for.

JULIET.

Madam, in happy time,[4] what day is that?

LADY CAPULET.

Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn,
The gallant, young, and noble gentleman,
The County Paris, at Saint Peter's Church,
Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

JULIET.

Now, by Saint Peter's Church, and Peter too,
He shall not make me there a joyful bride.
I wonder at this haste; that I must wed
Ere he, that should be husband, comes to woo.
I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam,
I will not marry yet; and when I do, I swear
It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate,
Rather than Paris:—these are news indeed!

LADY CAPULET.

Here comes your father; tell him so yourself,
And see how he will take it at your hands.[5]

Enter CAPULET *and* NURSE.

CAPULET.

When the sun sets, the air doth drizzle dew;

---

[1] **careful**: full of loving care for his daughter.
[2] **heaviness**: grief.
[3] **sorted out**: chosen; selected.
[4] **in happy time**: in this connection.
[5] **at your hands**: coming from you.

But for the sunset of my brother's son
It rains downright.[1]—
How now! a conduit,[2] girl? what, still in tears?
Evermore show'ring? In one little body
Thou counterfeit'st a bark,[3] a sea, a wind:
For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea,
Do ebb and flow with tears; the bark thy body is,
Sailing in this salt flood; the winds, thy sighs;
Who,—raging with thy tears, and they with them,—
Without a sudden calm, will overset[4]
Thy tempest-tossed body.—How now, wife!
Have you deliver'd to her our decree?

LADY CAPULET.

Ay, sir; but she will none, she gives you thanks.
I would the fool were married to her grave!

CAPULET.

Soft! take me with you,[5] take me with you, wife.
How! will she none? doth she not give us thanks?
Is she not proud? doth she not count her[6] blest,
Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought
So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

JULIET.

Not proud, you have; but thankful, that you have:
Proud can I never be of what I hate;
But thankful even for hate, that is meant love.

CAPULET.

How now, how now, chop-logic! [7] What is this?
'Proud,'—and 'I thank you,'—and 'I thank you not;'—
And yet 'not proud:'—mistress minion,[8] you,
Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds,

---

[1] **rains downright:** rains straight down; everything is going as it should. [2] **a conduit:** a fountain. [3] **bark:** ship. [4] **overset:** capsize. [5] **take me with you:** let me understand you. [6] **count her:** consider herself. [7] **chop-logic:** chopped-up reasoning; nonsense. [8] **mistress minion:** mistress darling (a pet name).

But fettle[1] your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next,
To go with Paris to Saint Peter's Church,
Or I will drag thee on a hurdle[2] thither.
Out, you green-sickness carrion![3] out, you baggage!
You tallow-face!

LADY CAPULET.

Fie, fie! what, are you mad?

JULIET.

Good father, I beseech you on my knees,

[*She kneels down.*

Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

CAPULET.

Hang thee, young baggage! disobedient wretch!
I tell thee what,—get thee to church o' Thursday,
Or never after look me in the face:
Speak not, reply not, do not answer me;
My fingers itch.[4]—Wife, we scarce thought us blest
That God had sent us but this only child;
But now I see this one is one too much,
And that we have a curse in having her:
Out on her, hilding![5]

NURSE.

God in heaven bless her!—
You are to blame, my lord, to rate[6] her so.

CAPULET.

And why, my lady wisdom? hold your tongue,
Good prudence; smatter[7] with your gossips, go.

NURSE.

I speak no treason.

---

[1] **fettle:** prepare; make ready. [2] **a hurdle:** a wooden sledge on which traitors were transported to their place of execution. [3] **green-sickness carrion:** such extremes of speech were common in Shakespeare's day; green sickness was an anemia of young girls. [4] **itch:** i.e., itch to slap her. [5] **hilding:** drudge; menial. [6] **rate:** berate. [7] **smatter:** chatter; prate.

CAPULET.

O, God ye god-den.

NURSE.

May not one speak?

CAPULET.

Peace, you mumbling fool!
Utter your gravity[1] o'er a gossip's bowl;
For here we need it not.

LADY CAPULET.

You are too hot.[2]

CAPULET.

God's bread! [3] it makes me mad: day, night, late, early,
At home, abroad, alone, in company,
Waking, or sleeping, still my care hath been
To have her matcht: and having now provided
A gentleman of princely parentage,
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly train'd,
Stuft, as they say, with honourable parts,[4]
Proportion'd as one's thought would wish a man,—
And then to have a wretched puling[5] fool,
A whining mammet,[6] in her fortune's tender,[7]
To answer—'I'll not wed,—I cannot love,
I am too young,—I pray you, pardon me;'—
But, an you will not wed, I'll pardon you:
Graze where you will, you shall not house with me:
Look to't, think on't, I do not use to jest.[8]
Thursday is near; lay hand on heart, advise:[9]
An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend;
An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in the streets,

---

[1] **gravity**: wisdom. [2] **hot**: angry. [3] **God's bread**: the bread or wafer that represents Christ's body in communion (a mild oath). [4] **parts**: traits of character. [5] **puling**: childish whining. [6] **mammet**: doll; puppet. [7] **in her fortune's tender**: at the moment good fortune presents itself to her. [8] **I do not use to jest**: I am not accustomed to jesting. [9] **advise**: think carefully.

For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,
Nor what is mine shall never do thee good:
Trust to't,[1] bethink you; I'll not be forsworn. [*Exit.*

JULIET.

Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,
That sees into the bottom of my grief?
O, sweet my mother, cast me not away!
Delay this marriage for a month, a week;
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

LADY CAPULET.

Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word:
Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee. [*Exit.*

JULIET.

O God!—O nurse, how shall this be prevented?
My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven;
How shall that faith return again to earth,
Unless that husband send it me from heaven
By leaving earth?—comfort me, counsel me.—
Alack, alack, that heaven should practise stratagems
Upon[2] so soft a subject as myself!—
What say'st thou? hast thou not a word of joy?
Some comfort, nurse.

NURSE.

Faith, here it is. Romeo
Is banished; and all the world to nothing,[3]
That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you;[4]
Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.
Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,
I think it best you married with the county.
O, he's a lovely gentleman!

---

[1] **Trust to't:** believe it.
[2] **practise stratagems/Upon:** play tricks on.
[3] **all the world to nothing:** a bet in which all the odds are against you.
[4] **challenge:** claim.

Romeo's a dishclout[1] to him: an eagle, madam,
Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye
As Paris hath. Beshrew[2] my very heart,
I think you are happy[3] in this second match,
For it excels your first; or if it did not,
Your first is dead; or 'twere as good he were,
As living here, and you no use of him.

JULIET.

Speakest thou from thy heart?

NURSE.

And from my soul too; else beshrew them both.

JULIET.

Amen!

NURSE.

What?

JULIET.

Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous much.
Go in; and tell my lady I am gone,
Having displeased my father, to Laurence' cell,
To make confession, and to be absolved.

NURSE.

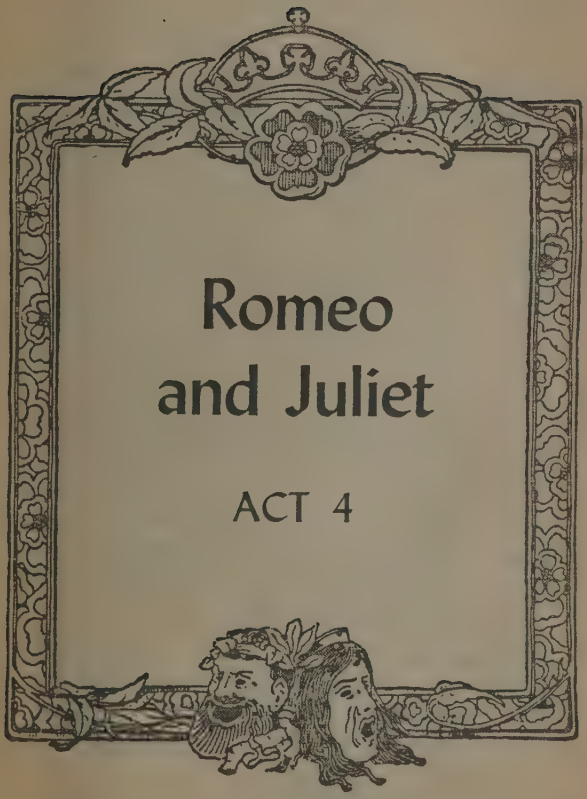
Marry, I will; and this is wisely done. [*Exit.*

JULIET.

Ancient damnation![4] O most cursed fiend!
[*She looks after* NURSE.
Is it more sin to wish me thus forsworn,
Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue
Which she hath praised him with above compare
So many thousand times?—Go, counsellor;
Thou and my bosom[5] henceforth shall be twain.[6]—
I'll to the friar, to know his remedy:
If all else fail, myself have power to die. [*Exit.*

---

[1] **a dishclout:** dishcloth; a nothing.
[2] **Beshrew:** curse.
[3] **happy:** fortunate.
[4] **Ancient damnation:** old devil; the Devil, the first damned one.
[5] **bosom:** confidence.
[6] **twain:** separate.



Romeo and Juliet

ACT 4

ACT IV

As SHE comes to Friar Lawrence's cell, Juliet encounters Paris, who has already told the Monk of the marriage plans. Masking her true feelings, she engages briefly in dialogue with Paris, and when he goes, she reveals her desperation to Friar Lawrence, threatening to kill herself if he cannot help her avoid a false marriage with Paris. He gives her a vial containing a drug which will induce a deathlike sleep for forty-two hours. This she is to take on Wednesday night, the eve of her marriage. Meanwhile, he will send a message to Romeo in Mantua, and he and the Friar will rescue Juliet from the Capulet tomb when she awakens. Confident and calm again, Juliet returns home, pretends obedience to her father's wishes, and acquiesces when he advances the marriage to the next day, Wednesday, instead of Thursday. She must now drink the potion a day earlier than Friar Lawrence planned; in spite of fears and nightmare imaginings of awakening alone in the tomb, she takes the drug. Busy with final wedding preparations, Lady Capulet sends the Nurse to awaken Juliet on her wedding day; she finds her, as they believe, dead. Juliet's father and mother, Paris and the Nurse join in a chorus of lamentation, and Friar Lawrence bids them prepare to conduct the body to the tomb. The Act ends with the musicians, who were engaged to play gay wedding music, exchanging quips with young Peter, a serving boy, as they wait to conduct Juliet to the tomb.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Verona. FRIAR LAURENCE'S *cell.*

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE *and* PARIS.

FRIAR LAURENCE.
On Thursday, sir? the time is very short.

PARIS.
My father Capulet will have it so;
And I am nothing slow to slack his haste.[1]

FRIAR LAURENCE.
You say you do not know the lady's mind:
Uneven[2] is the course; I like it not.

PARIS.
Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,
And therefore have I little talkt of love;
For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.
Now, sir, her father counts[3] it dangerous
That she doth give her sorrow so much sway;[4]
And, in his wisdom, hastes our marriage,
To stop the inundation of her tears;
Which, too much minded by herself alone,[5]
May be put from her by society:
Now do you know the reason of this haste.

FRIAR LAURENCE [*aside*].
I would I knew not why it should be slow'd.—
Look, sir, here comes the lady toward my cell.

Enter JULIET.

PARIS.
Happily met, my lady and my wife!

JULIET.
That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.

---

[1] **I am nothing slow to slack his haste:** in other words, he will do nothing to interfere with Capulet's hasty preparations; an obscure passage that does not mean what it says. [2] **uneven:** irregular. [3] **counts:** considers. [4] **sway:** latitude. [5] **alone:** in solitude.

PARIS.

That may be must be, love, on Thursday next.

JULIET.

What must be shall be.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

That's a certain text.

PARIS.

Come you to make confession to this father?

JULIET.

To answer that, were to confess to you.

PARIS.

Do not deny to him that you love me.

JULIET.

I will confess to you that I love him.

PARIS.

So will ye, I am sure, that you love me.

JULIET.

If I do so, it will be of more price,[1]
Being spoke behind your back, than to your face.

PARIS.

Poor soul, thy face is much abused with tears.

JULIET.

The tears have got small victory by that;
For it was bad enough before their spite.

PARIS.

Thou wrong'st it, more than tears, with that report.

JULIET.

That is no slander, sir, which is a truth;
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

PARIS.

Thy face is mine, and thou hast slander'd it.

JULIET.

It may be so, for it is not mine own.—

---

[1] **price:** value.

Are you at leisure, holy father, now;
Or shall I come to you at evening mass? [1]

FRIAR LAURENCE.

My leisure serves me, pensive daughter, now.—
My lord, we must entreat the time alone.[2]

PARIS.

God shield I should disturb devotion!—
Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse ye:
Till then, adieu; and keep this holy kiss. [*Exit.*

JULIET.

O, shut the door! and when thou hast done so,
Come weep with me; past hope, past cure, past help!

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Ah, Juliet, I already know thy grief;
It strains me past the compass of my wits:[3]
I hear thou must, and nothing may prorogue[4] it,
On Thursday next be married to this county.

JULIET.

Tell me not, friar, that thou hear'st of this,
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it:
If, in thy wisdom, thou canst give no help,
Do thou but call my resolution wise,
And with this knife I'll help it presently.
God join'd my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands;
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo seal'd,
Shall be the label to another deed,
Or my true heart with treacherous revolt
Turn to another, this shall slay them both:
Therefore, out of thy long-experienced time,
Give me some present[5] counsel; or, behold,
'Twixt my extremes[6] and me this bloody knife

---

[1] **evening mass:** vespers. [2] **entreat the time alone:** beg that you leave us. [3] **It strains me past the compass of my wits:** i.e., it goes beyond the reach of my ability or authority to help you. [4] **prorogue:** postpone or delay. [5] **present:** immediate. [6] **extremes:** desperate straits.

Shall play the umpire; arbitrating that
Which the commission of thy years and art
Could to no issue of true honour bring.[1]
Be not so long to speak; I long to die,
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Hold, daughter: I do spy a kind of hope,
Which craves as desperate an execution
As that is desperate which we would prevent.
If, rather than to marry County Paris,
Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,
Then is it likely thou wilt undertake
A thing like death to chide away this shame,
That copest[2] with death himself to scape from it;
And, if thou darest, I'll give thee remedy.

JULIET.

O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,
From off the battlements of yonder tower;
Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk
Where serpents are; chain me with roaring bears;
Or shut me nightly in a charnel-house,[3]
O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,
With reeky[4] shanks, and yellow chapless[5] skulls;
Or bid me go into a new-made grave,
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud;
Things that, to hear them told, have made me tremble;
And I will do it without fear or doubt,
To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Hold, then; go home, be merry, give consent
To marry Paris: Wednesday is to-morrow;

---

[1] **Which the commission of thy years and art/Could to no issue of true honour bring:** that is, which your experience and holy powers could not, with honor, solve. [2] **copest:** dealeth. [3] **charnel-house:** a place for the storage of human bones, occasioned by the fact that many medieval cemeteries were used again and again. [4] **reeky:** reeking. [5] **chapless:** jawless.

To-morrow night look that thou lie alone,
Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber:
Take thou this vial, being then in bed,
And this distilled liquor drink thou off:
When, presently, through all thy veins shall run
A cold and drowsy humour;[1] for no pulse
Shall keep his native[2] progress, but surcease:
No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou livest;
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade
To paly ashes; thy eyes' windows fall,[3]
Like death, when he shuts up the day of life;
Each part, deprived of supple government,[4]
Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death:
And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death
Thou shalt continue two-and-forty hours,
And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.
Now, when the bridegroom in the morning comes
To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead:
Then, as the manner of our country is,
In thy best robes, uncover'd,[5] on the bier,
Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault
Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.
In the mean time, against thou shalt awake,[6]
Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift;[7]
And hither shall he come: and he and I
Will watch thy waking, and that very night
Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.
And this shall free thee from this present shame;
If no inconstant[8] toy, nor womanish fear,
Abate thy valour in the acting it.

JULIET.

Give me, give me! O, tell not me of fear!

---

[1] **humour:** sensation. [2] **native:** natural. [3] **eyes' windows fall:** eyelids close. [4] **supple government:** flexibility of movement. [5] **uncover'd:** face and hands uncovered. [6] **against thou shalt awake:** in preparation for the time when you shall awake. [7] **drift:** inclination; plan. [8] **inconstant toy:** trifling circumstance or change of fancy.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Hold; get you gone, be strong and prosperous
In this resolve: I'll send a friar with speed
To Mantua, with my letters to thy lord.

JULIET.

Love give me strength! and strength shall help afford.
Farewell, dear father! [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Hall in CAPULET'S *house.*

Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, NURSE, *and* SERVING-MEN *two or three.*

CAPULET.

So many guests invite as here are writ.—
[*Exit* FIRST SERVANT.
Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning[1] cooks.

SECOND SERVING-MAN.

You shall have none ill, sir; for I'll try[2] if they can lick their fingers.

CAPULET.

How canst thou try them so?

SECOND SERVING-MAN.

Marry, sir, 'tis an ill cook that cannot lick his own fingers: therefore he that cannot lick his fingers goes not with me.

CAPULET.

Go, be gone.— [*Exit* SECOND SERVANT.
We shall be much unfurnisht[3] for this time.—
What, is my daughter gone to Friar Laurence?

NURSE.

Ay, forsooth.

---

[1] **cunning:** skilled.
[2] **try:** test; a good cook was one that tasted her own cooking.
[3] **unfurnisht:** unprepared (another of Capulet's deliberately modest statements).

CAPULET.

Well, he may chance to do some good on her:
A peevish self-will'd harlotry it is.

NURSE.

See where she comes from shrift with merry look.

Enter JULIET.

CAPULET.

How now, my headstrong! where have you been gadding?

JULIET.

Where I have learn'd me to repent the sin
Of disobedient opposition
To you and your behests;[1] and am enjoin'd
By holy Laurence to fall prostrate here,
And beg your pardon:—pardon, I beseech you!
Henceforward I am ever ruled [2] by you.

CAPULET.

Send for the county; go tell him of this:
I'll have this knot knit up to-morrow morning.

JULIET.

I met the youthful lord at Laurence' cell;
And gave him what becomed [3] love I might,
Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

CAPULET.

Why, I am glad on't; this is well,—stand up,—
This is as't should be.—Let me see the county;
Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.—
Now, afore God, this reverend holy friar,
All our whole city is much bound [4] to him.

JULIET.

Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,[5]
To help me sort such needful ornaments[6]
As you think fit to furnish me to-morrow?

---

[1] **behests**: wishes.
[2] **ruled**: guided.
[3] **becomed**: becoming; suitable.
[4] **bound**: indebted.
[5] **closet**: bedchamber.
[6] **ornaments**: wedding finery.

LADY CAPULET.

No, not till Thursday; there is time enough.

CAPULET.

Go, nurse, go with her:—we'll to church to-morrow.

[*Exeunt* JULIET *and* NURSE.

LADY CAPULET.

We shall be short in our provision:
'Tis now near night.

CAPULET.

Tush, I will stir about,
And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife:
Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her;
I'll not to bed to-night;—let me alone;
I'll play the housewife for this once.—What, ho!—
They are all forth: well, I will walk myself
To County Paris, to prepare him up
Against to-morrow: my heart is wondrous light,
Since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

JULIET'S *chamber.*

Enter JULIET *and* NURSE.

JULIET.

Ay, those attires are best:—but, gentle nurse,
I pray thee, leave me to myself to-night;
For I have need of many orisons[1]
To move the heavens to smile upon my state,
Which, well thou know'st, is cross[2] and full of sin.

Enter LADY CAPULET.

LADY CAPULET.

What, are you busy, ho? need you my help?

---

[1] orisons: prayers.
[2] cross: perverse.

JULIET.

No, madam; we have cull'd [1] such necessaries
As are behoveful [2] for our state[3] to-morrow:
So please you, yet me now be left alone,
And let the nurse this night sit up with you;
For, I am sure, you have your hands full all
In this so sudden business.

LADY CAPULET.

Good night:
Get thee to bed, and rest; for thou hast need.

[*Exeunt* LADY CAPULET *and* NURSE.

JULIET.

Farewell!—God knows when we shall meet again.
I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,
That almost freezes up the heat of life:
I'll call them back again to comfort me;—
Nurse!—What should she do here?
My dismal scene I needs must act alone.—
Come, vial.—
What if this mixture do not work at all?
Must I of force be married to the county?
No, no;—this shall forbid it:—lie thou there.—

[*Laying down her dagger.*

What if it be a poison, which the friar
Subtly hath minister'd to have me dead,
Lest in this mariage he should be dishonour'd,
Because he married me before to Romeo?
I fear it is: and yet, methinks, it should not,
For he hath still been tried [4] a holy man:
I will not entertain so bad a thought.—
How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
I wake before the time that Romeo

---

[1] **cull'd:** selected.
[2] **behoveful:** useful.
[3] **state:** ceremony.
[4] **still been tried:** always proved to be.

Come to redeem me? there's a fearful point!
Shall I not, then, be stifled in the vault,
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?
Or, if I live, is it not very like,
The horrible conceit [1] of death and night,
Together with the terror of the place,—
As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,
Where, for this many hundred years, the bones
Of all my buried ancestors are packt;
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,[2]
Lies festering in his shroud; where, as they say,
At some hours in the night spirits resort;—
Alack, alack, is it not like that I,
So early waking,—what with loathsome smells;
And shrieks like mandrakes[3] torn out of the earth,
That living mortals, hearing them, run mad;—
O, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,[4]
Environed [5] with all these hideous fears?
And madly play with my forefathers' joints?
And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud?
And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's[6] bone,
As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?—
O, look! methinks I see my cousin's ghost
Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body
Upon a rapier's point:—stay, Tybalt, stay!—
Romeo, I come! this do I drink to thee.

[She falls upon her bed within the curtains.

---

[1] **horrible conceit:** i.e., the effect which all the horrors would have upon Juliet's imagination. [2] **green in earth:** newly buried. [3] **mandrakes:** herbs which have forklike roots resembling a human body; when torn up, they were supposed to utter human cries that made the hearer go mad or die. [4] **distraught:** distracted. [5] **Environed:** surrounded. [6] **great kinsman:** that is, great-grandfather, etc.

Scene iv.

Hall in CAPULET'S *house.*

Enter LADY CAPULET *and* NURSE.

LADY CAPULET.

Hold, take these keys, and fetch more spices, nurse.

NURSE.

They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.[1]

Enter CAPULET.

CAPULET.

Come, stir, stir, stir! the second cock hath crow'd,
The curfew-bell hath rung, 'tis three o'clock:—
Look to the baked meats, good Angelica:
Spare not for cost.

NURSE.

Go, you cot-quean,[2] go,
Get you to bed; faith, you'll be sick to-morrow
For this night's watching.

CAPULET.

No, not a whit: what! I have watcht ere now
All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

LADY CAPULET.

Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt[3] in your time;
But I will watch you from such watching now.

[*Exeunt* LADY CAPULET *and* NURSE.

CAPULET.

A jealous-hood,[4] a jealous-hood!

Enter three or four SERVING-MEN *with spits, and logs, and baskets.*

Now, fellow,

---

[1] **pastry:** the room where paste for pies was made.
[2] **cot-quean:** a man who busied himself with women's affairs.
[3] **a mouse-hunt:** "a hunter of women, for whom *mouse* was formerly a term of endearment."—Halliwell.
[4] **jealous-hood:** a jealous woman, with a quibble on the cap that women usually wore.

What's there?

FIRST SERVING-MAN.

Things for the cook, sir; but I know not what.

CAPULET.

Make haste, make haste. [*Exit* FIRST SERVING-MAN.]—Sirrah, fetch drier logs:
Call Peter, he will show thee where they are.

SECOND SERVING-MAN.

I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,
And never trouble Peter for the matter. [*Exit.*

CAPULET.

Mass,[1] and well said; a merry whoreson, ha!
Thou shalt be logger-head.[2]—Good faith, 'tis day:
The county will be here with music straight,
For so he said he would:—I hear him near.—
[*Play music.*
Nurse!—wife!—what, ho!—what, nurse, I say!

Enter NURSE.

Go waken Juliet, go and trim her up:
I'll go and chat with Paris:—hie, make haste,
Make haste; the bridegroom he is come already:
Make haste, I say. [*Exeunt.*

Scene v.

JULIET'S *chamber.*

Enter NURSE.

NURSE.

Mistress!—what, mistress!—Juliet!—fast,
I warrant her, she:—
Why, lamb!—why, lady!—fie, you slug-a-bed!—
Why, love, I say!—madam! sweetheart!—why, bride!

---

[1] Mass: by the Mass (a mild oath).
[2] logger-head: blockhead.

What, not a word?—you take your pennyworths now;
Sleep for a week; for the next night, I warrant,
The County Paris hath set up his rest[1]
That you shall rest but little.—God forgive me,
Marry, and amen, how sound is she asleep!
I must needs wake her.—Madam, madam, madam!—
Ay, let the county take you in your bed;
He'll fright you up, i'faith.—Will it not be?
What, drest! and in your clothes! and down again!
I must needs wake you:—Lady! lady! lady!—
Alas, alas!—Help, help! my lady's dead!—
O, well-a-day, that ever I was born!—
Some *aqua-vitæ*, ho!—My lord! my lady!

Enter LADY CAPULET.

LADY CAPULET.
What noise is here?

NURSE.
O lamentable day!

LADY CAPULET.
What is the matter?

NURSE.
Look, look! O heavy[2] day!

LADY CAPULET.
O me, O me!—My child, my only life,
Revive, look up, or I will die with thee!—
Help, help!—call help.

Enter CAPULET.

CAPULET.
For shame, bring Juliet forth; her lord is come.

NURSE.
She's dead, deceased, she's dead; alack the day!

---

[1] **set up his rest:** fully determined (from the game of primero).
[2] **heavy:** sad.

LADY CAPULET.

Alack the day, she's dead, she's dead, she's dead!

CAPULET.

Ha! let me see her:—out, alas! she's cold;
Her blood is settled, and her joints are stiff;
Life and these lips have long been separated:
Death lies on her like an untimely frost
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.

NURSE.

O lamentable day!

LADY CAPULET.

O woeful time!

CAPULET.

Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail,
Ties up my tongue, and will not let me speak.

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE *and* PARIS, *with* MUSICIANS.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

CAPULET.

Ready to go, but never to return:—
O son, the night before thy wedding-day
Hath Death lain with thy wife:—see there she lies,
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.
Death is my son-in-law, Death is my heir;
My daughter he hath wedded: I will die,
And leave him all; life, living,[1] all is Death's.

PARIS.

Have I thought long to see this morning's face,
And doth it give me such a sight as this?

LADY CAPULET.

Accurst, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!

---

[1] **living:** possessions.

Most miserable hour that e'er time saw
In lasting labour of his pilgrimage!
But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,
But one thing to rejoice and solace in,
And cruel Death hath catcht[1] it from my sight!

NURSE.

O woe! O woeful, woeful, woeful day!
Most lamentable day, most woeful day,
That ever, ever, I did yet behold!
O day! O day! O day! O hateful day!
Never was seen so black a day as this:
O woeful day, O woeful day!

PARIS.

Beguiled,[2] divorced, wronged, spited, slain!
Most detestable Death, by thee beguiled,
By cruel cruel thee quite overthrown!—
O love! O life!—not life, but love in death!

CAPULET.

Despised, distressed, hated, martyr'd, kill'd!—
Uncomfortable time, why camest thou now
To murder, murder our solemnity? [3]—
O child! O child!—my soul, and not my child!—
Dead art thou!—alack, my child is dead;
And with my child my joys are buried!

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Peace, ho, for shame! confusion's[4] cure lives not
In these confusions. Heaven and yourself
Had part in this fair maid; now heaven hath all,
And all the better is it for the maid:
Your part in her you could not keep from death;
But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.
The most you sought was her promotion;[5]
For 'twas your heaven she should be advanced:

---

[1] **catcht**: snatched.
[2] **Beguiled**: cheated.
[3] **solemnity**: ceremony; celebration.
[4] **confusion**: great loss.
[5] **her promotion**: her advancement.

And weep ye now, seeing she is advanced
Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?
O, in this love, you love your child so ill,
That you run mad, seeing that she is well:
She's not well married that lives married long;
But she's best married that dies married young.
Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary[1]
On this fair corse;[2] and, as the custom is,
In all her best array bear her to church:
For though fond nature bids us all lament,
Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

CAPULET.

All things that we ordained festival
Turn from their office to black funeral:
Our instruments to melancholy bells;
Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast;
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change;
Our bridal flowers serve for a burial corse;
And all things change them to the contrary.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Sir, go you in,—and, madam, go with him;—
And go, Sir Paris;—every one prepare
To follow this fair corse unto her grave:
The heavens do lour[3] upon you for some ill;[4]
Move[5] them no more by crossing their high will.

[*They all, but the* NURSE *and* MUSICIANS, *go forth, casting rosemary on her.*

FIRST MUSICIAN.

Faith, we may put up our pipes and be gone.

NURSE.

Honest good fellows, ah, put up, put up;
For, well you know, this is a pitiful case. [*Exit.*

---

[1] **rosemary:** a flower associated with funerals, being an emblem of immortality.
[2] **corse:** corpse.
[3] **lour:** lower; frown.
[4] **ill:** sin.
[5] **Move:** anger.

FIRST MUSICIAN.

Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

Enter PETER.

PETER.

Musicians, O, musicians, 'Heart's ease,[1] Heart's ease:' O, an you will have me live, play 'Heart's ease.'

FIRST MUSICIAN.

Why 'Heart's ease'?

PETER.

O, musicians, because my heart itself plays 'My heart is full of woe:' O, play me some merry dump,[2] to comfort me.

FIRST MUSICIAN.

Not a dump we; 'tis no time to play now.

PETER.

You will not, then?

FIRST MUSICIAN.

No.

PETER.

I will, then, give it you soundly.

FIRST MUSICIAN.

What will you give us?

PETER.

No money, on my faith; but the gleek,[3]—I will give you the minstrel.[4]

FIRST MUSICIAN.

Then will I give you the serving-creature.

PETER.

Then will I lay the serving-creature's dagger on your pate. I will carry no crotchets:[5] I'll *re* you, I'll *fa* you; do you note me?

---

[1] 'Heart's ease': the title of a popular song of the day. [2] dump: mournful song. [3] gleek: scoff. [4] I will give you the minstrel: I will call you minstrel (a derogatory term). [5] I will carry no crotchets: I will not bear your whims (the musician's refusal to play), a quibble on another meaning of crotchet—a quarter note in music.

FIRST MUSICIAN.

An you *re* us and *fa* us, you note us.

SECOND MUSICIAN.

Pray you, put up your dagger, and put out your wit.[1]

PETER.

Then have at you with my wit![2] I will dry-beat you with an iron wit, and put up my iron dagger.—Answer me like men:

> When griping grief the heart doth wound,
> And doleful dumps the mind oppress,
> Then music with her silver sound—

why 'silver sound'? why 'music with her silver sound'?—What say you, Simon Catling?[3]

FIRST MUSICIAN.

Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

PETER.

Pretty!—What say you, Hugh Rebeck?[4]

SECOND MUSICIAN.

I say, 'silver sound,' because musicians sound for silver.

PETER.

Pretty too!—What say you, James Soundpost?[5]

THIRD MUSICIAN.

Faith, I know not what to say.

PETER.

O, I cry you mercy;[6] you are the singer: I will say for you. It is 'music with her silver sound,' because such fellows as you have seldom gold for sounding:—

> Then music with her silver sound
> With speedy help doth lend redress.[7] [*Exit.*

---

[1] **put out your wit:** display your wit. [2] **have at you with my wit:** beware my wit. [3] **Catling:** a lute string made of catgut. [4] **Rebeck:** a three-stringed musical instrument which has evolved into the violin. [5] **Soundpost:** peg supporting the body of a stringed instrument. [6] **cry your mercy:** beg your pardon. [7] **redress:** relief.

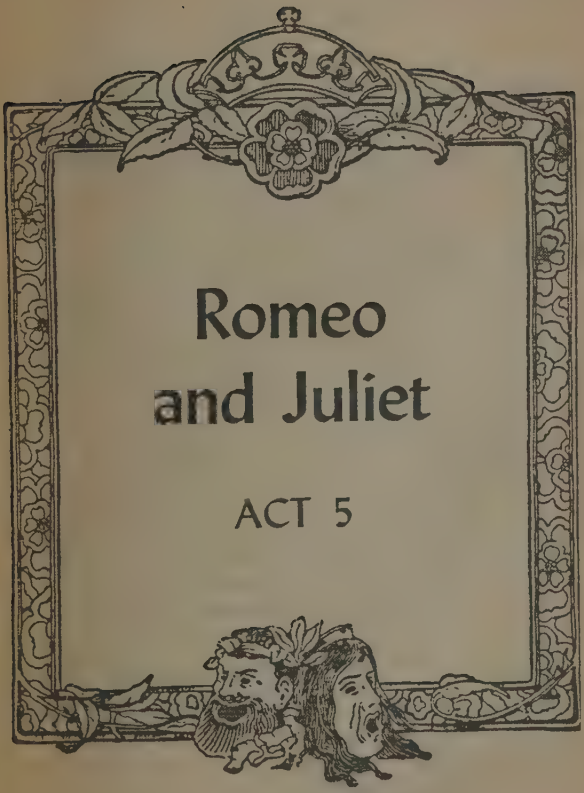
FIRST MUSICIAN.

What a pestilent knave is this same!

SECOND MUSICIAN.

Hang him, Jack!—Come, we'll in here; tarry for the mourners, and stay dinner.[1] [*Exeunt.*

[1] **stay dinner:** wait for dinner (the funeral feast).



Romeo and Juliet

ACT 5

ACT V

In Mantua, Romeo's servant, Balthasar, brings him word of Juliet's death. Romeo immediately vows to join his wife in death, and after ordering horses to take him to Verona, visits an apothecary from whom he gets a deadly poison. Meanwhile, Friar Lawrence has learned that his letter to Romeo in Mantua was not delivered; his messenger, Friar John, was quarantined in a plague-infested house and prevented from leaving Verona. Friar Lawrence sets off for the Capulet tomb, to watch beside Juliet until she awakens. Paris, bringing flowers to Juliet's tomb, is disturbed by the entrance of Romeo. They fight, and Paris is killed; then Romeo drinks the poison and dies beside his love. Friar Lawrence meets Balthasar, whom Romeo has left on guard outside, finds the corpses of Paris and Romeo, and, as Juliet awakes, tells her of the death of her husband and of Paris, and begs her to leave the tomb and come with him. Frightened by the noise of approaching people, he leaves, and Juliet, awake and aware of the dead Romeo, seizes his dagger, stabs herself and dies. Capulet and Lady Capulet, Montague, whose wife has just died of grief at Romeo's banishment, and the Prince, all gather at the tomb. Friar Lawrence recites the sad story and his part in it, a tale that is corroborated by a letter from Romeo which Balthasar has, and the Prince reproaches Capulet and Montague for this tragic outcome of their feud. Montague and Capulet swear themselves to peace and to memorials in the names of their dead children, and the Prince closes the play, sadly commenting on such a "glooming peace"—

> "For never was a story of more woe
> Than this of Juliet and her Romeo."

ACT V. Scene I.

Mantua. A street.

Enter ROMEO.

ROMEO.

If I may trust the flattering eye of sleep,
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand:
My bosom's lord [1] sits lightly in his throne;
And all this day an unaccustom'd spirit
Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.
I dreamt my lady came and found me dead,—
Strange dream, that gives a dead man leave to think!—
And breathed such life with kisses in my lips,
That I revived, and was an emperor.
Ah me! how sweet is love itself possest,
When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!

Enter BALTHASAR, *his man, booted.*

News from Verona!—How now, Balthasar!
Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?
How doth my lady? Is my father well?
How fares my Juliet? that I ask again;
For nothing can be ill, if she be well.

BALTHASAR.

Then she is well, and nothing can be ill:
Her body sleeps in Capels' [2] monument,[3]

---

[1] **bosom's lord:** heart.
[2] **Capels:** Capulets.
[3] **monument:** crypt; vault.

And her immortal part with angels lives.
I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault,
And presently took post[1] to tell it you:
O, pardon me for bringing these ill news,
Since you did leave it for my office,[2] sir.

ROMEO.

Is it even so? then I defy you, stars!—
Thou know'st my lodging: get me ink and paper,
And hire post-horses; I will hence to-night.

BALTHASAR.

I do beseech you, sir, have patience:
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import
Some misadventure.

ROMEO.

Tush, thou art deceived:
Leave me, and do the thing I bid thee do.
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

BALTHASAR.

No, my good lord.

ROMEO.

No matter: get thee gone,
And hire those horses; I'll be with thee straight.

[*Exit* BALTHASAR.

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night.
Let's see for means:—O mischief, thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!
I do remember an apothecary,—
And hereabouts he dwells,—which late I noted
In tatter'd weeds,[3] with overwhelming[4] brows,
Culling of simples;[5] meagre were his looks,
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones:
And in his needy[6] shop a tortoise hung,
An alligator stuft, and other skins

---

[1] presently took post: immediately rode.
[2] office: duty.
[3] tatter'd weeds: ragged clothing.
[4] overwhelming: overhanging (frowning).
[5] culling of simples: sorting medicinal herbs.
[6] needy: poor.

Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves
A beggarly account[1] of empty boxes,
Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds,
Remnants of packthread, and old cakes of roses,
Were thinly scatter'd, to make up a show.
Noting this penury, to myself I said,
'An if a man did need a poison now,
Whose sale is present[2] death in Mantua,
Here lives a caitiff[3] wretch would sell it him.'
O, this same thought did but forerun[4] my need;
And this same needy man must sell it me.
As I remember, this should be the house:
Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.—
What, ho! apothecary!

Enter APOTHECARY.

APOTHECARY.

Who calls so loud?

ROMEO.

Come hither, man.—I see that thou art poor;
Hold, there is forty ducats:[5] let me have
A dram of poison; such soon-speeding gear[6]
As will disperse itself through all the veins,
That the life-weary taker may fall dead;
And that the trunk[7] may be discharged of breath
As violently as hasty powder fired
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

APOTHECARY.

Such mortal[8] drugs I have; but Mantua's law
Is death to any he that utters[9] them.

ROMEO.

Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness,
And fear'st to die? famine is in thy cheeks,
Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes,

---

[1] **beggarly account:** poor showing. [2] **present:** immediate. [3] **caitiff:** slavish; miserable. [4] **forerun:** precede. [5] **ducats:** gold coins. [6] **soon-speeding gear:** quick-acting stuff. [7] **trunk:** body. [8] **mortal:** deadly. [9] **utters:** sells.

Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back,
The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law:
The world affords no law to make thee rich;
Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.

APOTHECARY.

My poverty, but not my will, consents.

ROMEO.

I pay thy poverty, and not thy will.

APOTHECARY.

Put this in any liquid thing you will,
And drink it off; and, if you had the strength
Of twenty men, it would dispatch you[1] straight.

ROMEO.

There is thy gold; worse poison to men's souls,
Doing more murders in this loathsome world,
Than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell:
I sell thee poison: thou hast sold me none.
Farewell: buy food, and get thyself in flesh.[2]—
Come, cordial, and not poison, go with me
To Juliet's grave; for there must I use thee. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Verona. FRIAR LAURENCE'S *cell.*

Enter FRIAR JOHN.

FRIAR JOHN.

Holy Franciscan friar! brother, ho!

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

This same should be the voice of Friar John.—
Welcome from Mantua: what says Romeo?
Or, if his mind be writ,[3] give me his letter.

---

[1] **dispatch you:** send you off; kill you.
[2] **get thyself to flesh:** get some flesh on your bones.
[3] **if his mind be writ:** if his intentions are written down.

FRIAR JOHN.

Going to find a barefoot brother out,
One of our order, to associate me,[1]
Here in this city visiting the sick,
And finding him; the searchers[2] of the town,
Suspecting that we both were in a house
Where the infectious pestilence did reign,
Seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth;
So that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd.[3]

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Who bare[4] my letter, then, to Romeo?

FRIAR JOHN.

I could not send it,—here it is again,—
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,
So fearful were they of infection.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Unhappy fortune! by my brotherhood,
The letter was not nice,[5] but full of charge[6]
Of dear import; and the neglecting it
May do much danger. Friar John, go hence;
Get me an iron crow,[7] and bring it straight
Unto my cell.

FRIAR JOHN.

Brother, I'll go and bring it thee. [*Exit.*

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Now must I to the monument alone;
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake:
She will beshrew[8] me much that Romeo
Hath had no notice of these accidents;[9]
But I will write again to Mantua,
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come;—
Poor living corse, closed in a dead man's tomb! [*Exit.*

---

[1] **to associate me:** to accompany me; it was the custom for friars to travel in pairs. [2] **searchers:** quarantine officers; health officers. [3] **stay'd:** delayed. [4] **bare:** bore. [5] **nice:** trifling; inconsequential. [6] **charge:** weight; importance. [7] **iron crow:** crowbar. [8] **beshrew:** reproach. [9] **accidents:** incidents.

Scene III.

Verona. A churchyard; in it a monument belonging to the CAPULETS.

Enter COUNTY PARIS *and his* PAGE, *with flowers and sweet water.*[1]

PARIS.

Give me thy torch, boy; hence, and stand aloof:—
Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.
Under yond yew-trees lay thee all along,
Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground;
So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread—
Being loose, unfirm, with digging-up of graves—
But thou shalt hear it: whistle then to me,
As signal that thou hear'st something approach.
Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

PAGE [*aside*].

I am almost afraid to stand alone
Here in the churchyard; yet I will adventure. [*Retires.*

PARIS.

Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew:
[PARIS *strews the tomb with flowers.*
O woe, thy canopy is dust and stones!
Which with sweet water nightly I will dew;
Or, wanting[2] that; with tears distill'd by moans:
The obsequies[3] that I for thee will keep,
Nightly shall be to strew thy grave and weep.
[BOY *whistles.*
The boy gives warning something doth approach.
What cursed foot wanders this way to-night,

---

[1] **sweet water:** perfumed water.
[2] **wanting:** lacking.
[3] **obsequies:** rites; ritual.

To cross[1] my obsequies and true love's rite?
What, with a torch!—muffle me,[2] night, awhile. [*Retires*

Enter ROMEO, *and* BALTHASAR *with a torch, a mattock,*[3] *and a crow of iron.*

ROMEO.

Give me that mattock and the wrenching-iron.
Hold, take this letter; early in the morning
See thou deliver it to my lord and father.
Give me the light: upon thy life, I charge thee,
Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,
And do not interrupt me in my course.
Why I descend into this bed of death,
Is partly to behold my lady's face;
But chiefly to take thence from her dead finger
A precious ring,—a ring that I must use
In dear[4] employment: therefore hence, be gone:—
But if thou, jealous,[5] dost return to pry
In what I further shall intend to do,
By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint,
And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs:
The time and my intents are savage-wild;
More fierce and more inexorable far
Than empty tigers or the roaring sea.

BALTHASAR.

I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

ROMEO.

So shalt thou show me friendship.—Take thou that:
Live, and be prosperous: and farewell, good fellow.

---

[1] **cross:** disturb.
[2] **muffle me:** hide me.
[3] **mattock:** a long-bladed digging tool.
[4] **dear:** important.
[5] **jealous:** suspicious.

BALTHASAR [*aside*].

For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout:
His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt.[1] [*Retires.*

ROMEO.

Thou detestable maw,[2] thou womb of death,
Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,
[ROMEO *opens the tomb.*
And, in despite,[3] I'll cram thee with more food!

PARIS.

This is that banisht haughty Montague
That murder'd my love's cousin,—with which grief,
It is supposed, the fair creature died,—
And here is come to do some villainous shame
To the dead bodies: I will apprehend him.—
Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague!
Can vengeance be pursued further than death?
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee:
Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.

ROMEO.

I must indeed; and therefore came I hither.—
Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man;
Fly hence, and leave me:—think upon these gone;
Let them affright thee.—I beseech thee, youth,
Put not another sin upon my head,
By urging me to fury:—O, be gone!
By heaven, I love thee better than myself;
For I come hither arm'd against myself:
Stay not, be gone;—live, and hereafter say,
A madman's mercy bid thee run away.

PARIS.

I do defy thy conjurations,[4]
And apprehend thee for a felon here.

---

[1] **doubt:** question.
[2] **maw:** stomach; a symbol of voracious appetite.
[3] **in despite:** for spite.
[4] **conjurations:** entreaties.

ROMEO.

Wilt thou provoke me? then have at thee, boy!

[*They fight.*

PAGE.

O Lord, they fight! I will go call the watch.

[*Exit.*—PARIS *falls.*

PARIS.

O, I am slain!—If thou be merciful,
Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet.

ROMEO.

In faith, I will.—Let me peruse this face:—
Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris!—
What said my man, when my betossed soul
Did not attend him[1] as we rode? I think
He told me Paris should have married Juliet:
Said he not so? or did I dream it so?
Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
To think it was so?—O, give me thy hand,
One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!
I'll bury thee in a triumphant[2] grave;—
A grave? O, no, a lantern,[3] slaughter'd youth,
For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
This vault a feasting[4] presence[5] full of light.
Death,[6] lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd.

[*Laying* PARIS *in the tomb.*

How oft when men are at the point of death
Have they been merry? which their keepers[7] call
A lightning before death: O, how may I
Call this a lightning? O my love! my wife!
Death, that hath suckt the honey of thy breath,
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty:
Thou art not conquer'd; beauty's ensign[8] yet
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,

---

[1] **attend him:** pay attention to him. [2] **triumphant:** splendid. [3] **lantern:** *louvre* or *lanternium*—a round or octagonal many-windowed turret by which ancient cathedrals were illuminated. [4] **feasting:** festive. [5] **presence:** state-room where monarchs received court visitors. [6] **Death:** i.e., Paris. [7] **keepers:** nurses. [8] **ensign:** mark.

And death's pale flag is not advanced there.
Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?
O, what more favour can I do to thee,
Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain
To sunder his that was thine enemy?
Forgive me, cousin!—Ah, dear Juliet,
Why art thou yet so fair? shall I believe
That unsubstantial Death is amorous;
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
Thee here in dark to be his paramour?
For fear of that, I still [1] will stay with thee;
And never from this palace of dim night
Depart again: here, here will I remain
With worms that are thy chamber-maids; O, here
Will I set up my everlasting rest;
And shake the yoke of inauspicious[2] stars
From this world-wearied flesh.—Eyes, look your last!
Arms, take your last embrace! and, lips, O you
The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
A dateless[3] bargain to engrossing[4] death!—
Come, bitter conduct,[5] come, unsavoury guide!
Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark!
Here's to my love! [*drinks*]—O true apothecary!
Thy drugs are quick.—Thus with a kiss I die. [*Dies.*

Enter, at the other end of the churchyard, FRIAR LAURENCE, *with a lantern, crow, and spade.*

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Saint Francis be my speed! how oft to-night
Have my old feet stumbled at graves! [6]—Who's there?

---

[1] **still:** always. [2] **inauspicious:** unlucky. [3] **dateless:** eternal. [4] **engrossing:** monopolizing. [5] **bitter conduct:** stern conductor or escort. [6] **stumbled at graves:** an unlucky omen, according to the superstition of the time.

BALTHASAR.

Here's one, a friend, and one that knows you well.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good my friend,
What torch is yond, that vainly lends his light
To grubs and eyeless skulls? as I discern,
It burneth in the Capels' monument.

BALTHASAR.

It doth so, holy sir; and there's my master,
One that you love.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Who is it?

BALTHASAR.

Romeo.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

How long hath he been there?

BALTHASAR.

Full half an hour.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Go with me to the vault.

BALTHASAR.

I dare not, sir:
My master knows not but I am gone hence;[1]
And fearfully did menace me with death,
If I did stay to look on his intents.[2]

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Stay, then; I'll go alone.—Fear comes upon me,
O, much I fear some ill unlucky thing.

BALTHASAR.

As I did sleep under this yew-tree here,
I dreamt my master and another fought,
And that my master slew him.

---

[1] knows not but I am gone hence: does not know that I am still here.

[2] his intents: that is, what he planned to do.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

Romeo!—
Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains
[*Stoops and looks on the blood and weapons.*
The stony entrance of this sepulchre?—
What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace?
[*Enters the tomb.*
Romeo! O, pale!—Who else? what, Paris too?
And steept in blood?—Ah, what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance![1]—
The lady stirs. [JULIET *wakes.*

JULIET.

O comfortable[2] friar! where is my lord?—
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am: where is my Romeo? [*Noise within.*

FRIAR LAURENCE.

I hear some noise. Lady, come from that nest
Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep:
A greater power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents: come, come away:
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead;
And Paris too: come, I'll dispose of thee
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns:
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming;
Come, go, good Juliet; I dare no longer stay. [*Exit.*

JULIET.

Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.
What's here? a cup, closed in my true love's hand?
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless[3] end:—

---

[1] **chance:** mischance.
[2] **comfortable:** comforting.
[3] **timeless:** untimely.

O churl! [1] drunk all, and left no friendly drop
To help me after?—I will kiss thy lips;
Haply[2] some poison yet doth hang on them,
To make me die with a restorative. [*Kisses him.*
Thy lips are warm!

FIRST WATCH [*within*].

Lead, boy:—which way?

JULIET.

Yea, noise?—then I'll be brief.—O happy dagger!
[*Snatching* ROMEO's *dagger.*
This is thy sheath; there rust, and let me die.
[*She stabs herself and falls.*

Enter WATCH, *with the* PAGE *of* PARIS.

PAGE.

This is the place; there, where the torch doth burn.

FIRST WATCHMAN.

The ground is bloody; search about the churchyard:
Go, some of you, whoe'er you find attach.[3]
[*Exeunt some of the* WATCH.
Pitiful sight! here lies the county slain;—
And Juliet bleeding; warm, and newly dead,
Who here hath lain these two days buried.—
Go, tell the prince,—run to the Capulets,—
Raise up the Montagues,—some others search:—
We see the ground whereon these woes do lie;
But the true ground of all these piteous woes
We cannot without circumstance[4] descry.[5]

Enter some of the WATCH, *with* BALTHASAR.

SECOND WATCHMAN.

Here's Romeo's man; we found him in the churchyard.

---

[1] **churl**: ill-mannered fellow.
[2] **Haply**: perchance.
[3] **attach**: arrest.
[4] **circumstance**: knowing all the details.
[5] **descry**: discover.

FIRST WATCHMAN.

Hold him in safety, till the prince come hither.

Enter FRIAR LAURENCE, *and another* WATCHMAN.

THIRD WATCHMAN.

Here is a friar, that trembles, sighs, and weeps:
We took this mattock and this spade from him,
As he was coming from this churchyard side.

FIRST WATCHMAN.

A great suspicion:[1] stay[2] the friar too.

Enter the PRINCE *and* ATTENDANTS.

PRINCE ESCALUS.

What misadventure is so early up,
That calls our person from our morning rest?

Enter old CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, *and others.*

CAPULET.

What should it be, that they so shriek abroad?

LADY CAPULET.

The people in the street cry 'Romeo,'
Some 'Juliet,' and some 'Paris;' and all run,
With open outcry, toward our monument.

PRINCE ESCALUS.

What fear is this which startles in our ears?

FIRST WATCHMAN.

Sovereign, here lies the County Paris slain;
And Romeo dead; and Juliet, dead before,
Warm, and new kill'd.

PRINCE ESCALUS.

Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.

FIRST WATCHMAN.

Here is a friar, and slaughter'd Romeo's man;
With instruments upon them, fit to open
These dead men's tombs.

---

[1] A great suspicion: a very suspicious matter.
[2] stay: hold; arrest.

CAPULET.

O heaven!—O wife, look how our daughter bleeds!
This dagger hath mista'en[1]—for, lo, his house[2]
Is empty on the back of Montague,—
And it mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom!

LADY CAPULET.

O me! this sight of death is as a bell,[3]
That warns[4] my old age to a sepulchre.

Enter old MONTAGUE *and others.*

PRINCE ESCALUS.

Come, Montague; for thou art early up,
To see thy son and heir more early down.

MONTAGUE.

Alas, my liege, my wife is dead to-night;
Grief of my son's exile hath stopt her breath:
What further woe conspires against mine age?

PRINCE ESCALUS.

Look, and thou shalt see.

MONTAGUE.

O thou untaught! what manners is in this,
To press before thy father to a grave?

PRINCE ESCALUS.

Seal up the mouth of outrage for a while,
Till we can clear these ambiguities,
And know their spring,[5] their head, their true descent;
And then will I be general of your woes,[6]
And lead you even to death: meantime forbear,
And let mischance be slave to patience.—
Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

I am the greatest, able to do least,
Yet most suspected, as the time and place

---

[1] **hath mista'en:** mistaken—has been misdirected. [2] **his house:** the dagger's sheath; in Shakespeare's time, the dagger was worn at the back. [3] **bell:** death knell. [4] **warns:** calls. [5] **spring:** origin. [6] **general of your woes:** leader of the investigation.

Doth make against me, of this direful murder;
And here I stand, both to impeach and purge[1]
Myself condemned and myself excused.

PRINCE ESCALUS.

Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

FRIAR LAURENCE.

I will be brief, for my short date of breath[2]
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.
Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet;
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife:
I married them; and their stoln[3] marriage-day
Was Tybalt's dooms-day, whose untimely death
Banisht the new-made bridegroom from this city;
For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pined.
You, to remove that siege of grief from her,
Betrothed, and would have married her perforce,
To County Paris:—then comes she to me;
And, with wild looks, bid me devise some means
To rid her from this second marriage,
Or in my cell there would she kill herself.
Then gave I her, so tutor'd by my art,
A sleeping potion; which so took effect
As I intended, for it wrought on her
The form of death: meantime I writ to Romeo,
That he should hither come as this dire night,
To help to take her from her borrow'd[4] grave,
Being the time the potion's force should cease.
But he which bore my letter, Friar John,
Was stay'd by accident; and yesternight
Return'd my letter back. Then all alone
At the prefixed hour of her waking,
Came I to take her from her kindred's vault;
Meaning to keep her closely[5] at my cell

---

[1] impeach and purge: accuse and clear.
[2] short date of breath: short time to live.
[3] stoln: stolen; secret.
[4] borrow'd: that is, only temporary.
[5] closely: hidden.

Till I conveniently could send to Romeo:
But when I came,—some minute ere the time
Of her awaking,—here untimely lay
The noble Paris and true Romeo dead.
She wakes; and I entreated her come forth,
And bear this work of heaven with patience:
But then a noise did scare me from the tomb;
And she, too desperate, would not go with me,
But, as it seems, did violence on herself.
All this I know; and to the marriage
Her nurse is privy:[1] and, if aught in this
Miscarried by my fault, let my old life
Be sacrificed, some hour before his time,
Unto the rigour of severest law.

PRINCE ESCALUS.

We still have known thee for a holy man.—
Where's Romeo's man? what can he say in this?

BALTHASAR.

I brought my master news of Juliet's death;
And then in post[2] he came from Mantua
To this same place, to this same monument.
This letter he early[3] bid me give his father;
And threaten'd me with death, going in the vault,
If I departed not, and left him there.

PRINCE ESCALUS.

Give me the letter,—I will look on it.—
Where is the county's page, that raised[4] the watch?—
Sirrah, what made your master in this place?[5]

PAGE.

He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave;
And bid me stand aloof, and so I did:
Anon comes one with light to ope[6] the tomb;

---

[1] is privy: is secret witness. [2] in post: in haste. [3] early: earlier. [4] raised: roused. [5] what made your master in this place: that is, what was Paris doing in the cemetery. [6] ope: open.

And by and by my master drew on him;
And then I ran away to call the watch.

PRINCE ESCALUS.

This letter doth make good the friar's words,
Their course of love, the tidings of her death:
And here he writes that he did buy a poison
Of a poor pothecary, and therewithal
Came to this vault to die, and lie with Juliet.
Where be these enemies? Capulet, Montague,
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!
And I, for winking at[1] your discords too,
Have lost a brace of kinsmen: all are punisht.

CAPULET.

O brother Montague, give me thy hand:
This is my daughter's jointure,[2] for no more
Can I demand.

MONTAGUE.

But I can give thee more:
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;
That while Verona by that name is known,
There shall no figure at such rate[3] be set
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

CAPULET.

As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie;
Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

PRINCE ESCALUS.

A glooming peace this morning with it brings;
The sun, for sorrow, will not show his head:
Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things;
Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished:
For never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo. [*Exeunt.*

---

[1] **winking at:** closing my eyes to; ignoring.
[2] **jointure:** an estate settled on a wife in lieu of dowry; marriage settlement.
[3] **rate:** value.

OTHER AIRMONT CLASSICS

Complete and Unabridged with Introductions

CL 1	PRIDE AND PREJUDICE, *Jane Austen*	50¢
CL 2	TREASURE ISLAND, *Robert Louis Stevenson*	50¢
CL 3	THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE, *Stephen Crane*	50¢
CL 4	HUCKLEBERRY FINN, *Mark Twain*	50¢
CL 5	THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS, *Cooper*	50¢
CL 6	TOM SAWYER, *Mark Twain*	50¢
CL 7	THE SCARLET LETTER, *Nathaniel Hawthorne*	50¢
CL 8	EDGAR ALLAN POE, *Selected Stories and Poems*	50¢
CL 9	OLIVER TWIST, *Charles Dickens*	60¢
CL10	KIDNAPPED, *Robert Louis Stevenson*	50¢
CL11	WUTHERING HEIGHTS, *Emily Brontë*	50¢
CL12	20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA, *Jules Verne*	50¢
CL13	THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON, *Johann Wyss*	50¢
CL14	SILAS MARNER, *George Eliot*	50¢
CL15	GULLIVER'S TRAVELS, *Jonathan Swift*	50¢
CL16	THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES, *Hawthorne*	50¢
CL17	JANE EYRE, *Charlotte Brontë*	60¢
CL18	HEIDI, *Johanna Spyri*	50¢
CL19	FRANKENSTEIN, *Mary Shelley*	50¢
CL20	THE BLACK ARROW, *Robert Louis Stevenson*	50¢
CL21	A TALE OF TWO CITIES, *Charles Dickens*	60¢
CL22	ROBINSON CRUSOE, *Daniel DeFoe*	50¢
CL23	BLACK BEAUTY, *Anna Sewell*	50¢
CL24	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS, *Jules Verne*	50¢
CL25	O. HENRY, *The Four Million and other stories*	50¢
CL26	A CHRISTMAS CAROL, *Charles Dickens*	50¢
CL27	CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS, *Rudyard Kipling*	50¢
CL28	THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL, *Baroness Orczy*	50¢
CL29	A CONNECTICUT YANKEE, *Twain*	50¢
CL30	CALL OF THE WILD, *Jack London*	40¢
CL31	THE DEERSLAYER, *James Fenimore Cooper*	60¢
CL32	THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER, *Mark Twain*	50¢
CL33	MOBY DICK, *Herman Melville*	75¢
CL34	IVANHOE, *Sir Walter Scott*	60¢
CL35	THE PATHFINDER, *James Fenimore Cooper*	60¢
CL36	WHITE FANG, *Jack London*	50¢
CL37	THE OREGON TRAIL, *Francis Parkman*	50¢
CL38	THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE, *Thomas Hardy*	50¢
CL39	THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY, *Oscar Wilde*	50¢
CL40	THE INVISIBLE MAN, *H. G. Wells*	40¢
CL41	THE PRAIRIE, *Cooper*	60¢
CL42	DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE, *Stevenson*	50¢
CL43	THE MILL ON THE FLOSS, *George Eliot*	75¢
CL44	THE TIME MACHINE, *H. G. Wells*	40¢
CL45	THE WAR OF THE WORLDS, *H. G. Wells*	40¢
CL46	THE VIRGINIAN, *Owen Wister*	50¢
CL47	THE MASTER OF BALLANTRAE, *Stevenson*	50¢
CL48	MICHAEL STROGOFF, *Jules Verne*	50¢
CL49	THE PIONEERS, *James Fenimore Cooper*	60¢
CL50	THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW, *Irving*	50¢
CL51	THE OUTCASTS OF POKER FLAT, *Bret Harte*	50¢
CL52	THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD, *Oliver Goldsmith*	50¢
CL53	TYPEE, *Herman Melville*	50¢
CL54	LORD JIM, *Joseph Conrad*	50¢
CL55	LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI, *Mark Twain*	50¢
CL56	THE PRINCE, *Niccolò Machiavelli*	50¢
CL57	THE ODYSSEY, *Homer*	60¢
CL58	SENSE AND SENSIBILITY, *Jane Austen*	50¢
CL59	THE FOOD OF THE GODS, *H. G. Wells*	50¢

CL60	A JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH, *Verne*	50¢
CL61	THE AGE OF CHIVALRY, *Thomas Bulfinch*	60¢
CL62	THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, *Doyle*	50¢
CL63	THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE, *Thomas Hardy*	50¢
CL64	THE SEA WOLF, *Jack London*	50¢
CL65	DAVID COPPERFIELD, *Charles Dickens*	75¢
CL66	TWICE-TOLD TALES, *Nathaniel Hawthorne*	60¢
CL67	ROBIN HOOD	50¢
CL68	GREAT EXPECTATIONS, *Charles Dickens*	60¢
CL69	THE WIZARD OF OZ, *L. Frank Baum*	50¢
CL70	THE STORY OF MY LIFE, *Helen Keller*	50¢
CL71	THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN	50¢
CL72	DRACULA, *Bram Stoker*	50¢
CL73	MASTER OF THE WORLD, *Jules Verne*	50¢
CL74	BEN HUR, *Lew Wallace*	50¢
CL75	KIM, *Rudyard Kipling*	50¢
CL76	THE MOONSTONE, *William Wilkie Collins*	60¢
CL77	THE MYSTERIOUS ISLAND, *Jules Verne*	60¢
CL78	THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON, *H. G. Wells*	50¢
CL79	ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND, *L. Carroll*	50¢
CL80	THE AGE OF FABLE, *Thomas Bulfinch*	60¢
CL81	AESOP'S FABLES	50¢
CL82	TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES, *Thomas Hardy*	50¢
CL83	WALDEN—ESSAY ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, *Thoreau*	50¢
CL84	PÈRE GORIOT, *Honoré de Balzac*	60¢
CL85	TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST, *Charles Henry Dana*	60¢
CL86	THE JUNGLE, *Upton Sinclair*	60¢
CL87	GREEN MANSIONS, *W. H. Hudson*	50¢
CL88	THE MUTINY ON BOARD H.M.S. BOUNTY, *Wm. Bligh*	60¢
CL89	MADAME BOVARY, *Gustave Flaubert*	50¢
CL90	THE WAY OF ALL FLESH, *Samuel Butler*	50¢
CL91	LEAVES OF GRASS, *Walt Whitman*	75¢
CL92	MASTER SKYLARK, *John Bennett*	50¢
CL93	MEN OF IRON, *Howard Pyle*	50¢
CL94	EVANGELINE and other poems, *Henry W. Longfellow*	60¢
CL95	THE AMBASSADORS, *Henry James*	60¢
CL96	MAN AND SUPERMAN, *George Bernard Shaw*	50¢
CL97	THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, *Doyle*	50¢
CL98	THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY, *Henry James*	95¢
CL99	HANS BRINKER; OR, THE SILVER SKATES, *Mary Mapes Dodge*	60¢
CL100	AT THE BACK OF THE NORTH WIND, *George Macdonald*	60¢
CL101	THE ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO, *Carlo Collodi*	60¢
CL102	EMMA, *Jane Austen*	50¢
CL103	ADAM BEDE, *George Eliot*	75¢
CL104	THE MARBLE FAUN, *Nathaniel Hawthorne*	60¢
CL105	THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS, *Kenneth Grahame*	75¢
CL106	LITTLE WOMEN, *Louisa May Alcott*	95¢
CL107	PERSUASION, *Jane Austen*	50¢
CL108	JUDE THE OBSCURE, *Thomas Hardy*	75¢
CL109	THE JUNGLE BOOKS, *Rudyard Kipling*	50¢
CL110	THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU, *H. G. Wells*	50¢
CL111	IN THE DAYS OF THE COMET, *H. G. Wells*	50¢
CL112	HEART OF DARKNESS and THE END OF THE TETHER, *Joseph Conrad*	50¢
CL113	AN OUTCAST OF THE ISLANDS, *Joseph Conrad*	50¢
CL114	THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD, *Charles Dickens*	50¢
CL115	THE ILLIAD, *Homer*	60¢
CL116	BILLY BUDD AND THE ENCANTADAS, *H. Melville*	50¢
CL117	CANDIDE AND ZADIG, *Voltaire*	60¢
CL118	A WONDER BOOK, *Nathaniel Hawthorne*	60¢
CL119	CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA, *George Bernard Shaw*	50¢

CL120	FOUR MAJOR PLAYS, *Henrik Ibsen*	75¢
CL121	THE CONFIDENCE MAN, *Herman Melville*	60¢
CL122	DEAD SOULS, *Nikolai Gogol*	60¢
CL123	JUST SO STORIES, *Rudyard Kipling*	60¢
CL124	PUDD'NHEAD WILSON, *Mark Twain*	50¢
CL125	ANNA KARENINA, *Leo Tolstoy*	95¢
CL126	TOM SAWYER ABROAD and TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE, *Mark Twain*	60¢
CL127	THE THREE MUSKETEERS, *Alexandre Dumas*	95¢
CL128	THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV, *Fyodor Dostoyevsky*	95¢
CL129	FATHERS AND SONS, *Ivan Turgenev*	50¢
CL130	EREWHON, *Samuel Butler*	50¢
CL131	MANSFIELD PARK, *Jane Austen*	60¢
CL132	QUENTIN DURWARD, *Sir Walter Scott*	75¢
CL133	PEER GYNT, *Henrik Ibsen*	60¢
CL134	ROUGHING IT, *Mark Twain*	75¢
CL135	TOM JONES, *Henry Fielding*	95¢
CL136	FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD, *Thomas Hardy*	60¢
CL137	THE LADY OF THE LAKE, *Sir Walter Scott*	75¢
CL138	VANITY FAIR, *William M. Thackeray*	95¢
CL139	THE PRISONER OF ZENDA, *Anthony Hope*	50¢
CL140	KING SOLOMON'S MINES, *H. Rider Haggard*	60¢
CL141	BOB, SON OF BATTLE, *Alfred Ollivant*	75¢
CL142	FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON, *Jules Verne*	50¢
CL143	UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, *Harriet B. Stowe*	75¢
CL144	REBECCA OF SUNNYBROOK FARM, *Kate D. Wiggin*	60¢
CL145	CRIME AND PUNISHMENT, *Fyodor Dostoyevsky*	75¢
CL146	SHE, *H. Rider Haggard*	60¢
CL147	SISTER CARRIE, *Theodore Dreiser*	75¢
CL148	JANICE MEREDITH, *Paul L. Ford*	75¢
CL149	LORNA DOONE, *Richard D. Blackmore*	75¢
CL150	THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK, *Alexandre Dumas*	75¢
CL151	THE INNOCENTS ABROAD, *Mark Twain*	75¢
CL152	TRISTRAM SHANDY, *Lawrence Sterne*	75¢
CL153	DON QUIXOTE, *Miguel de Cervantes*	$1.25
CL154	THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO, *Alexandre Dumas*	95¢
CL155	THE TURN OF THE SCREW, *Henry James*	50¢
CL156	THE PRINCESS AND THE GOBLIN, *G. Macdonald*	60¢
CL157	UP FROM SLAVERY, *Booker T. Washington*	50¢
CL158	MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE and THE BEAUTIFUL LADY, *Booth Tarkington*	50¢
CL159	THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST-TABLE, *Oliver Wendell Holmes*	60¢
CL160	TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, *Mary Johnston*	75¢
CL161	THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF GUY DE MAUPASSANT	50¢
CL162	THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE-DAME, *Victor Hugo*	75¢
CL163	THE LADY OR THE TIGER, *Frank Stockton*	50¢
CL164	DEMOCRACY, AN AMERICAN NOVEL, *H. Adams*	50¢
CL165	THE RISE OF SILAS LAPHAM, *William D. Howells*	75¢
CL166	MAGGIE AND OTHER STORIES, *Stephen Crane*	60¢
CL167	STORIES OF KING ARTHUR, *Winder*	60¢
CL168	GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES	60¢
CL169	HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN'S FAIRY TALES	60¢
CL170	A STORY OF THE RED CROSS, *Clara Barton*	60¢
CL171	SHORT STORIES OF MARK TWAIN, *Mark Twain*	75¢
CL172	PLATO'S REPUBLIC, *Jowett Translation*	95¢
CL173	PARADISE LOST and PARADISE REGAINED, *Milton*	95¢
CL174	TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL DAYS, *Thomas Hughes*	95¢
CL175	TANGLEWOOD TALES, *Nathaniel Hawthorne*	60¢
CL176	THE AMERICAN, *Henry James*	60¢
CL177	VIRGIL'S AENEID, *Dryden's Translation*	75¢

William Shakespeare

TO THE READER

THIS FIGURE, THAT THOU HERE SEEST PUT,
IT WAS FOR GENTLE SHAKESPEARE CUT;
WHEREIN THE GRAVER HAD A STRIFE
WITH NATURE, TO OUT-DO THE LIFE:
O, COULD HE BUT HAVE DRAWN HIS WIT
AS WELL IN BRASS, AS HE HATH HIT
HIS FACE; THE PRINT WOULD THEN SURPASS
ALL, THAT WAS EVER WRIT IN BRASS.
BUT, SINCE HE CANNOT, READER, LOOK,
NOT ON HIS PICTURE, BUT HIS BOOK.

BEN: JONSON.

The Mediaeval view of man was generally not an exalted one. It saw him as more or less depraved, fallen from Grace as a result of Adam's sin; and the things of this world as of little value in terms of his salvation. Natural life was thought of mainly as a preparation for man's entry into Eternity. But Renaissance thought soon began to rehabilitate man and nature. Without denying man's need for Grace, men came gradually to accept the idea that there were "goods," values, "innocent delights" to be had in the world here and now. Man himself was seen no longer as wholly vile and depraved, incapable even of desiring goodness, but rather as Shakespeare saw him in *Hamlet*:

> *"What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason!*
> *how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how*
> *express and admirable! in action how like an angel!*
> *in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world!*
> *the paragon of animals!"*

It was, indeed, a very stirring time to be alive in. It wa
like spring, when promise, opportunity, challenge, and gro
peared where none had been dreamed of before. Perhaps thi
there is so much poetry of springtime in the age of Shakespea

Edited with Introduction and Suggestions for Study by Dr. Clara

Notes Edited by Lucy Mabry Fitzpatrick

AN AIRMONT CLASSIC
Published by Airmont Publishing Co., Inc.

KP-047-670